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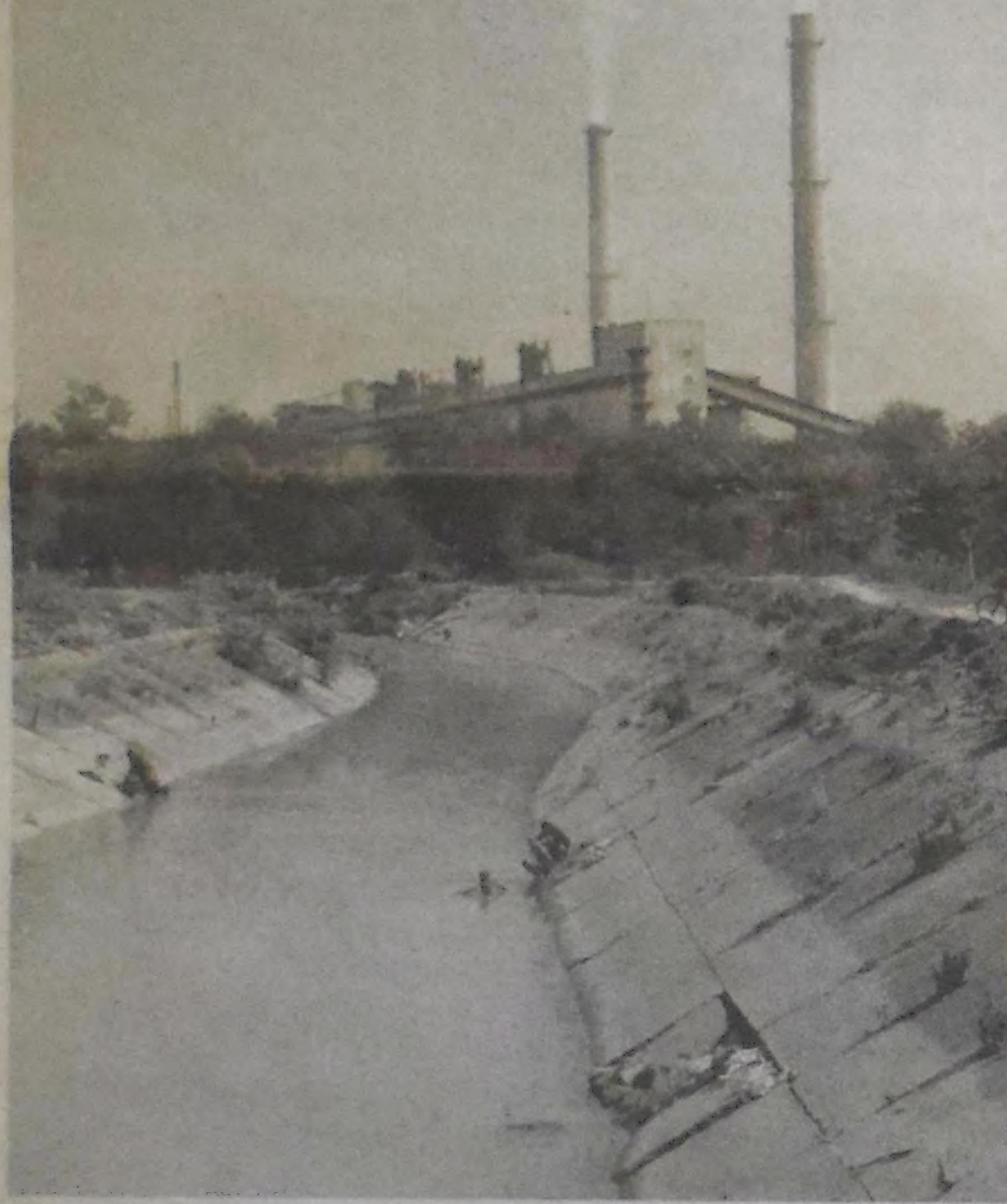
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61st year of publication



## Growth in India's industrial hub leaves many behind



**Mark Sappenfield**

KORBA, INDIA — Bhan Sai makes about \$1.40 a day. The minimum wage is almost twice that, but if he complains, he says, the steel mill will fire him.

Squatting by the roadside after a shift, his hands chalk-white from work, he says he came from the neighboring state of Jharkhand for this job, leaving his home to live in a tent camp outside town. The bus fare from there is one-fifth of his daily salary.

But among India's more than 300 million unskilled rural laborers, he is fortunate. He has a job.

Far from the call centers and air-conditioned malls that characterize the New India, the Old India has

labored on almost unchanged. Increasingly, India is hoping industry will help lift India's poor. Yet at the center of India's industrial heartland here in Korba, the hoped-for flood of jobs has not yet come.

India's capital-intensive approach to development, combined with the leaden effect of overregulation and corruption, is spreading India's newfound wealth down the economic ladder slowly, say experts. The gap between rich and poor is actually widening, economists say.

"The sectors that are doing well in India tend to be capital-intensive," not labor-intensive, says Ashish Narain, an economist at the World Bank in New Delhi.

In many respects, India's sudden economic growth has come from

its "inspiration" businesses — like back-office operations and software development — rather than the "perspiration" heavy industries that characterize China's success story.

That is slowly changing with India's new emphasis on industry. But unlike the industrializing Chinese countryside, this part of India does not make Spider-Man

action figures or cotton trousers. Instead, it produces electricity and steel — desperately needed fuel for a country that is plagued by power

*See India on page 2*

## Pope Benedict calls Brazilians back to the Catholic faith

**Harry der Nederlanden**

Well before Pope Benedict set his foot on Brazilian soil, the media had already set the stage and sketched the plot: a right-wing, hardline enforcer of doctrine — of European doctrine — was intruding into a part of the world where his brand of religion is counter-productive and goes against the grain. Knowing little of nothing of theology, the journalists nevertheless felt qualified to represent liberation theology as closer to the hearts and lives of Brazil's Catholics than the traditional teachings of the Church. Article after news article in effect framed the papal visit as a repetition of the European conquest of an indigenous culture and an act of repression.

It is true that in his May 9-13 visit, Pope Benedict came to a Brazil that has undergone great changes since the visit of Pope John Paul in 1991, when the country was governed by a military regime. Over the last 15 years the Catholic Church has lost large numbers to secularism and to evangelical churches, mostly Pentecostal. In 1991, some 90 percent of the population was Catholic; the latest statistics put that number nearer 60 percent. Meanwhile, the proportion of Pentecostals has risen from 5 percent in 1980 to over 17 percent in 2007. Even in the political arena Pentecostals are having an impact, capturing 10 percent of the

seats in congress. Pentecostalism has even made deep inroads into many Catholic congregations, altering the style of worship and the vitality of ministries. According to Newshour, some 57 percent of Brazil's Catholics call themselves charismatic.

Despite the drop in numbers, Brazil — and Latin America as a whole — is still the most Catholic region in the world, accounting for 45 percent of the world's 1.1 billion Catholics. Tens of thousands converged on Sao Paulo to welcome the Pope and to participate in huge open air masses. They also came for the canonization of the first Brazilian-born saint.

The words of the Pope reported by the press boiled down to three issues: abortion, social justice and indigenous religion.

*Pope at Aparecida*

The fact that Benedict upholds the Church's traditional teachings on contraception and abortion is taken as confirmation that he is reverting to his enforcer identity. Since casual sex, abortions and illegitimate births are becoming common in Brazil, it is considered somehow in bad taste to call Christian believers to a chaste lifestyle.

When the Pope warned that embracing elements of indigenous religion was contrary to Christian belief, this was interpreted as a profound insult to indigenous people. The often violent history of the colonization of the native peoples of Latin America was rehashed, as if the Pope's defense of the Catholic faith against syncretism (blending together different beliefs)

*See Pope on page 3*



## News

# Violence between rival Palestinian factions takes Gaza to the brink

**Joshua Mitnick**

Tel Aviv – As deadly clashes between rival factions Fatah and Hamas escalated for a fourth day on Wednesday, May 16, Palestinians in Gaza seemed to have returned to the brink of all-out internecine war that threatens to draw Israeli forces back into the troubled coastal strip of land.

In response to a series of bold Hamas offensives that killed more than 13 people, President Mahmoud Abbas was reportedly mulling declaring a state of emergency in the West Bank and Gaza.

With Gaza largely shut down except for the fighting, Islamic militants fired missiles at the home of a top Fatah security chief, killing several bodyguards.

The latest fighting between the rival militias – so far about three dozen Palestinians have been killed this week – has wrecked a Hamas-Fatah truce reached in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in February and exposed the parties' "unity" government as ineffectual, say analysts.

"The government is completely toothless," says Ghassan Khatib, a former cabinet minister under Mr. Abbas. "This is a round that will take some time, probably a couple of weeks. It will continue until Gaza will be in a different political context."

Meanwhile, in the first air strike after months of an informal cease-fire, an Israeli helicopter shot missiles at a Hamas training base in the southern Gaza town of



Hamas gunmen take cover

Rafah, killing at least four. The strike was retaliation for rocket salvos that left several injured and many houses damaged in the southern Israel town of Sderot.

## Israel mulls sending in troops

With Sderot residents in bomb shelters and demanding to be evacuated, the pressure has been ratcheted up on the government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to order a broad offensive in Gaza – a move that many in Israel see as inevitable.

"Israel won't tolerate attacks on its citizens," said Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz in a statement. "Israel will not be a party to an internal Palestinian power struggle. We will respond visibly."

Hamas's cross-border rocket salvos were interpreted in Israel as a ploy to tempt the army to order troops into Gaza, which would focus the warring Palestinian militias' attention on a common enemy.

Gaza schools and businesses were closed as residents stayed indoors to keep out of the crossfire and avoid random roadblocks. And after a series of Egyptian-mediated truces between Hamas and Fatah were announced and immediately broken, many locals expect a new escalation of the fighting.

"Palestinian people feel that the acts of Gaza are a form of betrayal, to the noble cause, and are only bringing shame and dishonor upon all the people," read an editorial from the Jerusalem-based *Al Quds* newspaper.

The piece compared the Gaza calamity to Palestinian displacement during Israel's 1948 War of Independence. "With their acts, [the militants] are actually renewing the disasters of 1948, leaving all Palestinians inside the homeland and outside crying and demoralized."

Whether turmoil or calm reigns in the streets of Gaza is now in the hands of Hamas's military wing as well as independent militias, say analysts. Palestinian Authority officials like Abbas and Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, a Hamas leader, have little ability to control the gunmen, they say.

Azzam al-Ahmad, a Fatah leader and deputy prime minister, said he expects Abbas to declare a state of emergency to end the violence.

"We need this state of emergency," al-

Ahmad told reporters in Ramallah. He also called for dismantling Hamas's Executive Force, accusing it of supporting the military wing of Hamas in its raids against pro-Abbas forces.

## Independent militias fill the void

Several groups have an interest in prolonging the violence, says Mr. Khatib.

Hamas's Damascus-based political leadership claims that Abbas and the Palestinian Liberation Organization have avoided implementing a commitment under the Mecca agreement to give the Islamic militants powers within the Fatah-dominated PLO umbrella group.

Independent militias linked to prominent Gaza families have moved into the security vacuum left by the Palestinian Authority, and also profit from the continued fighting.

Meanwhile, Hamas's military wing wants to consolidate its control in Gaza, where it is militarily superior but remains wary of efforts by the US and Israel to prop up forces loyal to Abbas.

"There are many people still in the security apparatus cooperating with the Americans and the Israelis," says Ahmed Yousef, a political adviser to Prime Minister Haniyeh of Hamas. "They are benefiting from the lack of law and order and the clashes and all these things. People in our community know exactly who they are. That's why you see many people targeting specific houses."

*Joshua Mitnick is a correspondent for The Christian Science Monitor. Safwat al-Kahlout contributed to this report from Gaza.*

## India continued from page 1

shortages and building as fast as brawn and bulldozers will allow.

In this way, Korba is a portrait of the emerging industrial India. Sitting on the country's richest coal seam in the remote state of Chhattisgarh, it is a Pittsburgh of the subcontinent – a thicket of smokestacks amid a landscape of rice paddies.

Earlier this year, seven power companies agreed to establish new plants in state of Chhattisgarh, where Korba is located. Two of India's largest conglomerates – Tata and Essar – are building new steel mills. In all, Chhattisgarh attracted more foreign investment than any other state in India during the first half of 2006.

This will surely bring jobs. By 2015, investment in India's coal belt – comprising Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Orissa – could create jobs for 700,000 people "the majority of whom would be from the rural and small town population," according to a survey by McKinsey, a consulting firm.

But the gap is enormous. Nearly two-thirds of the country is still caught in the agricultural sector, which is growing at a negligible 2 percent annually. Moreover, more than half of all Indians are aged 25 or younger, meaning the country will need

to add as many as 8 million jobs each year just to keep up.

"It is very misleading to justify heavy investments in capital-intensive projects on the grounds that they will create employment," says Jean Drèze, an honorary professor at the Delhi School of Economics, in an e-mail. "This is unlikely to do much for the rural poor."

Rajendra Mishra, a local labor leader, would like to see the government play a more active role in helping the rural poor find employment.

"The first responsibility is with the government," says Mr. Mishra. "The regulations are all there."

Indeed, India does not lack for regulations. There are 47 national labor laws and 157 state laws, by Mr. Narain's count, creating an almost impenetrable tangle of rules. "It's extremely difficult for anyone to know what their rights and responsibilities are," he says. "Part of the problem is the complexity."

The other part of the problem is corruption. A survey by Transparency International last year proclaimed that Indian businesses were the most willing to pay bribes to do business abroad. At home, the story is the same.

"In India, there are many regulations,

but there is very little regulation," says Professor Drèze. "The regulations are routinely evaded or used as an opportunity for extortion."

Suresh Bharti is one of those 20-somethings who needs a job. With his designer jeans and a denim cap, he does not fit the image of a poor Indian. But, he says, "I have no prospect of finding a job."

He can't find work at the local mine – the largest open-cast coal mine in Asia. Nor can he find a job at a factory in town.

Like many people here, he believes that industries hire only migrant workers from other states like Mr. Sai, who are easier to control. There is an element of truth to this, say experts, as industries prefer to hire migrant workers, who are less likely to cause trouble or disappear for days on end to attend a wedding or festival.

The numbers of migrant laborers are "not huge," says Narain, "but businesses will hire whoever they can get cheaply."

More deeply, however, Mr. Bharti's discontent also hints at a mounting unease



among rural Indians, as they struggle to adapt to a new economic order that they barely understand. For generations, land has been the primary benchmark of economic security here – even unskilled farmers could live off their own crops.

As industry's growing footprint swallows farmland, many – like Sai – have been forced to leave their homes in the hopes of finding a job.

"If we had any land, we wouldn't have come here," he says in the gathering dusk. "Nobody wants to live in a foreign place."

*Mark Sappenfield is a staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor*

## News

Pope *continued from page 1*

amounts to a renewed attempt to erase their religion and culture.

But most attention by far was focused on the inequalities and social injustices in Brazil and the Pope's hostility to liberation theology. Journalists described the huge variety of programs being carried out to help Brazil's poor, pointed out the focus of liberation theology on social justice issues, and implied that in its opposition to liberation theology the Vatican was shrinking back from addressing the plight of the poor.

The Pope did reject any form of religion that conflates the Church's mission with the transformation of social and economic conditions and that ignores the unique work of redemption accomplished by Jesus as the Son of God. But he also denounced the disregard of capitalism and neo-liberalism for the increasing gap between rich and poor and for lacking concern for the common good.

"The Marxist system, where it found its way into government, not only left a sad heritage of economic and ecological destruction but also a painful destruction of the human spirit," said Benedict. "And we can also see the same thing happening in the West, where the distance between rich and poor is growing constantly, and giving rise to a worrying degradation of personal dignity through drugs, alcohol and deceptive illusions of happiness."

The great majority of newspaper accounts seem to assume that the only way for the Catholic church to address social justice issues is to embrace a neo-Marxist theology. Invariably, upholding the traditional teachings of the Church on these issues is described as an attempt by the Vatican to impose a European form of Christianity on a continent that has developed a theology of its own.

"One can detect a certain weakening of Christian life in society overall and of participation in the life of the Catholic Church, due to secularism, hedonism, indifferentism, and proselytism by numerous sects, animist religions and new pseudo-religious phenomena," warned the Pope.

Meanwhile, he added, the family is "suffering a degree of adversity caused by secularism and by ethical relativism," as well as challenges such as poverty and "civil legislation opposed to marriage which, by supporting contraception and abortion, is threatening the future of peoples."

He urged the bishops to undertake efforts "to bring about this renewal of the Church that has been entrusted to your care."

Speaking in defense of the family and of life, Benedict warned lawmakers that those who support the liberalization of abortion are going contrary to the teachings of the church and may be subject to excommunication. That raised quite a furor in the press, as Brazil and other Latin American countries have been moving toward more liberal legislation on matters of sexuality and reproduction. Even before the Pope's visit, Brazilian President Lula da Silva distanced

## Electoral reform in Ontario

Most of the world's constitutional democracies use some form of proportional representation (PR) to elect deputies to their parliamentary bodies. There are many varieties of PR, but all in some fashion operate so as to ensure that the percentage of the popular vote going to a party at the polls is reflected roughly in the percentage of seats going to that same party. If the Liberals receive 38 percent of the vote, they will then receive approximately 38 percent of the seats in parliament.

By contrast, most English-speaking democracies, with the exceptions of New Zealand and Scotland, use a system variously known as single-member-plurality or first-past-the-post (FPTP). Under FPTP the entire country is divided into so many territorial constituencies, or ridings as we call them in Canada. Each riding elects a single member of parliament on the basis of plurality, that is, of which candidate receives the largest number of votes. In many cases, the winning candidate will have received less than a majority of the votes. Thus here in Canada the usual pattern is for one party to win virtually all the power as a majority government, despite the fact that most Canadians have voted against it.

Not surprisingly, Canadians are increasingly coming to recognize the injustice of such a system, which has fuelled calls for change. Here in Ontario the time has at last come to consider altering the system. Last year the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform began exploring various options for change. Ontarians were invited to submit their own proposals, while ranking the eight principles of fairness of representation, stable and effective parties/government/parliament, voter choice, stronger voter participation, simplicity and practicality, and legitimacy. I myself made a submission in which I argued for a mixed-member-proportional system (MMP).

Under MMP the province would still be divided into ridings. Voters would still vote for a local member of the legislature. But

himself from the Church's stance on abortion.

Catholic leaders are also, of course, concerned about the growth of the Pentecostal churches in Brazil, and the Pope was scheduled to meet with bishops to discuss how to stem the tide. R. Andrew Chesnut, professor of Latin American history at the University of Houston, said, the bishops "will probably point to the Charismatic Renewal as their best strategy to take on the Pentecostal competition. Liberation theology and the CEBS (Base Christian Communities) are not only out of favor with Pope Benedict, but for years now also have been eclipsed in fervor and numbers of practitioners by the Renewal. Pope Benedict and the bishops are well aware of the Pentecostalization process and will continue to embrace their own brand of charismatic worship as a way to stanch the exodus of nominal Catholics into Pentecostal churches."

But, according to Edward L. Cleary, director of Latin American studies at Providence College in Providence, Rhode Island, the Catholic Church in Latin America is already experiencing its own renewal as a result of the charismatic revival. The number of Brazilian priests has almost doubled since 1957 and the number of Seminarians has increased by 920 per cent. The participation of lay missionaries and catechists has also seen huge increases.

John Burdick, professor of anthropology at Syracuse University, objected that press coverage depicting Pentecostals as a threat to Catholics as if they are the enemy is a distortion: "Many evangelicals are involved at the grassroots in progressive social and political work, and many work side by side with Catholics every day to alleviate hunger, poverty, suffering, disease, and discrimination. Visit most poor neighborhoods and what you find is a kind of popular ecumenism, not the feeling of threat and anxiety articulated by church leaders."

And all this is happening by and large without the dubious benefit of liberation theology, he added.

*The quotes from Chesnut, Cleary and Burdick were taken from PBS Religion and Ethics Newsweekly.*



## Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

they would also cast a second vote for a party list, thereby effectively compensating those parties whose support is geographically diffuse. An exclusion clause would require a party to win a certain percentage of the list votes to receive any party seats in the legislature. This system has worked well in the Federal Republic of Germany for nearly 60 years.

When the Citizens' Assembly made its recommendation in April, it opted for MMP, on which Ontario voters will be voting in a referendum at the forthcoming provincial election. I would like to think that my own submission had some influence, but in fact MMP received the most support among the slightly more than one thousand submissions.

We oughtn't, of course, to attach utopian expectations to the adoption of PR. Politicians will still be politicians, and citizens will still be citizens, with all their virtues and vices. Yet if we go with PR, we have reason to hope that our political system will be more open, allowing more voices to be heard in the centres of power.

For those who believe that politics ought to be a matter of principles and not just of pragmatically brokering interests, PR will be welcome. The New Democrats can be more forthright about their commitment to socialism without fear of unfairly suffering at the polls. The Liberals, for decades the most successful at appealing to a variety of interests, may actually have to decide what it means to be liberal. Finally, Christians who have long felt excluded under the current setup may at last be free to enter the public square as Christians, with a distinctive vision for doing public justice. Look for more on PR in this space in the coming months.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, and is the author of the award-winning Political Visions and Illusions (InterVarsity Press). His blog can be found at: <http://byzantinecalvinist.blogspot.com/>.



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## Editorial

# Seeing double – double the pleasure

## Harry der Nederlanden

The Bible cultivates in believers a sort of double vision. Yes, Christians are a little cock-eyed, but that's not what I mean. What I mean is that we are coached to look for the hand of God in events and for the presence of God in history: we try to discern his goodness and care and look for signs of the coming Kingdom. At the same time, however, we are commanded to open our eyes to the brokenness, injustice, suffering and sin around us and within us; for the light of God's love and justice exposes what is wrong so that it may be forgiven and set right.

One of the first theology books I read was R.B. Kuiper's *The Glorious Body of Christ*, still worth reading. It builds on all those wonderful metaphors that describe the church – that's us – as Christ's body, as his bride, as perfect and spotless, as the salt of the earth and as the leaven that textures the whole of humanity and so on. Later I also read Paul Minear's even closer examination of the numerous biblical images of the church, like "people of God" and "new creation". These extravagant descriptions inevitably raise the question, Can all those wonderful, glorious things really apply to us?

We see so little of these perfections, whether in ourselves or in others, sometimes we find them hard to believe. That's why one of Screwtape's strategies (in C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters*) that he recommends to his junior devil is to prompt believers to focus on one another's shortcomings and failures. Then they'll see nothing of the good that the Spirit is working in them. That way too they'll begin to see the world as the devil's domain and to accord him the victory.

So the believer's vision is stalked by a certain irony. Even in the best enterprises in this life we are aware of how in the wink of an eye they can be turned into idols or how they are already blind to certain realities. On the other hand, even in those works that deny the truth of the gospel we often see the very lineage and lineaments of our Creator and Redeemer, for there is nothing good on this earth that does not draw willy-nilly on his goodness.

Sometimes this doubleness is driven home in our very bodies. I'm a student of literature, and I love irony, but irony in the body isn't always pleasant.

A little over a week ago, eager to delight in the first warm days of Spring, I headed out, as is my wont, to Short

Hills. The trails were still quite gummy in places, and after following the trail a short way, I conceived a grand project. Standing on the crest of a hill and looking across the ravine to the hill on the other side, I said to myself, "Instead of following the trails along the crest of the hill, I could cut straight across. Let's see how many ravines and creeks I can cross."

As I made my way down the steep slope into one of the many deep valleys that makes up this park, my knees protested but my spirit was game. The so-called hills in the park really don't rise very much above the surrounding countryside, but the valleys in between are gouged deep into the earth, so when you reach the bottom, you're looking up at steep hills. Many of the slopes are too steep to climb, at least for me, but one can always find a gentler slope a little farther upstream or downstream.

At the bottom of the first ravine, there was a creek to cross, much diminished from when it was engorged with runoff from winter snows. But by tossing a few big rocks midstream, I conquered that first obstacle and I was on my way. Although one creek nearly defeated me, two-and-a-half hours later I was standing on the main trail near the entrance looking back down into the park like Rocky on the steps of the capital building.

Hoowah! I had crossed four creeks and climbed through four ravines and then come back again. Hoowah! I breathed deep.

Yessir. I have never smoked, I don't drink, I eat well, I exercise, and the only woman I chase is my wife. Yessir, I told myself, I'm in better shape now than I was at 50. Thanks to my healthy regimen and my wife's good cooking. After my bout with colon cancer, I've made a point of taking time for myself to get some exercise. No, not jogging. That's torture. But I enjoy walking, especially in the parks along the Niagara escarpment.

As I surveyed the scene of my victory and lifted my hands over my head like Rocky, I felt a stitch in my side. I'd felt it there a few weeks earlier too. The doctor at the walk-in clinic had told me it was due to constipation. But I decided to have it checked out once again by my own doctor.

I had already had a scheduled colonoscopy and had to go in anyway to hear what that doctor had to say. So on the same day that one doctor told me that my latest colonoscopy was clear and that I wouldn't need to come in for another one for several years, another doctor told me the X-ray showed a tumour on my right lung. Apparently, a few obstreperous cells from my colon cancer survived the weeks of chemo and radiation after all, and they've started their evil work anew.

This too is part of life's irony. In the midst of life, we taste death; yet, stalked by death, we rejoice in life – even in eternal life.

That's not just my situation. It has just been brought home to me – and to mine – in a particular way. But it's emblematic of the situation of every believer. We are given life in all its fullness, and on certain occasions, if we are fortunate, we are filled from tip to toe with zest for life, and delight washes over us like sunshine on a Spring day. And then there comes that stitch in the side.

I'm not rocky after all. I'm just a grandfather – but a grateful one.

Near the end of the summer of 2001 I stood on the crest of that same hill from which I launched my recent creek-crossing adventure, and I wondered whether I'd get to see another Spring, whether I'd get to send my youngest son off to college, whether I'd be able to do any more hill-climbing after my operation. And I dreaded what lay before me: chemo, radiation. Baldness. Fortunately I

already had a headstart on the baldness.

And here I was six years later. Only a few days earlier I had held our newest grandchild in my arms, our third, but the first for our eldest daughter and her husband. The little fellow was quite content to lie in my arms. He had no choice but to entrust himself to those who now carry him around.

Life is an adventure. Life is full of ironies. There is life and death, sickness and health, fruitful and barren years, and for those who love God, they are gifts. Every day we wake up, having slept in the arms of providence, and we say, Thank you for this gift.

And as our feet hit the floor, we say, Give me more. And for the children of God, there is always more to come. The best wine is saved for last.

There's a moral in this too. I really don't like to moralize; I prefer irony. So I'll moralize about the irony. You can get your sleep, work hard at your exercise, watch what you eat, swallow your vitamins, become a vegetarian and do yoga, but you won't thereby conquer disease and death. One day there comes that stitch in your side.

That's true on the big scale as well. It's also a great metaphor for our engagement in culture and politics. We can invest great energy, desire and hopes in cultivating our health and wealth, our businesses and institutions, our rights and freedoms, our schools and churches, our own lives and families, but all those things are still subject to failure and loss, brokenness and ruin, folly and miscalculation. They are good things to be busy with, but their success is beyond our control.

We will not eradicate disease, poverty, hunger, loneliness, injustice and violence.

Death is still a powerful, dreaded enemy.

Yet, even through the ups and downs, the valleys and hills, the light and darkness, there's another more fundamental story. In that story, all our failures and deaths are already behind us, for in him we are more than conquerors and already possess life everlasting.

God does like us to climb to the top of a hill once in a while and jump up and down rejoicing and shouting, Hoowah! Hallelujah!

But in the irony of faith we can do that not just when we are in the flush of health and prosperity; we can do that even with cancer eating away at us. The life in which we rejoice doesn't terminate in the here and now. All those good things that excite and engage us now, from health to wealth, from justice to equality, from cultivating the earth to blowing ideas into words are not first of all goals that we must or even can achieve. They are first of all gifts – games to play before the face of God, games in which we seek to please God and one another.

In the end, if we pin our hopes on them, they crumble and they disappoint us. They leave us with nothing but a bitter taste. But if we accept them as good works that God has given us to enhance our humanity, he pumps them full of the sweetness and light of his very own presence.

That's divine irony – the sort of irony that is infused, not with cynicism, but with love. For the greatest irony is that God enters into our humanity at the point of our experience of need and frailty. At the point, then, where childlike we depend on him to be washed and to be fed and to be cradled in his fatherly arms.

Meanwhile, we live and strive and witness that light is better than darkness and life better than death, for our God is life and light itself.

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Canada

**Letters**

## Rewriting South African history?

In his account of his trip to South Africa Bert Witvoet comments on the country's attempt "to restore to black Africans ancestral lands that were taken by white settlers" (CC 30 April 2007, p. 19).

The phrase "ancestral lands" could be misleading. When in 1488 the Portuguese Bartholomew Diaz reached as first white sailor the Cape of Good Hope, only a few Bushmen and Hottentots, now called Khoikhoi, lived in southern Africa, following the animals they hunted for food. The situation had not changed much when Jan van Riebeeck planted the first Dutch colony in 1652. In fact, European diseases and killings by the Boers decimated these original inhabitants even further.

When the Boers started to move away from Cape Town they entered a largely empty country, until in the 1770s they came to the Great Fish River, about 800 km from the Cape, on their way to Natal (so named by Vasco da Gama on December 25, 1497 in honor of the birth of Christ). There they encountered Bantu clans, who for hundreds of years had been moving southward from Sudan.

When in the early 19th century the small Zulu clan emerged as a major fighting force, numerous tribes were either massacred or scattered, not unlike what happened in Europe around 400 when the Huns moved from Asia into Europe. These massacres created empty spaces in Natal, and when in the mid-1830s the Boers started their Great Trek, they tried to buy this unoccupied land from king Dingane. As Donald Morris has pointed out, "The Bantu viewed the land as an entailed property that belonged to the clan. A chieftain might dispose of the right to live on the land, but he could not dispose of the land itself, nor were his arrangements binding on his successor. The European mind in general could not grasp this concept and regarded a land transaction as a permanent exchange of real property. The Bantu view insured European encroachment and the European view future strife."

But were Natal and part of Transvaal ancestral Bantu land? Not really; Bantu clans had conquered the area and killed most of the original "inhabitants" – the Bushmen and Khoikhoi (if roaming around can be regarded

as inhabiting). In other words, strictly speaking only the Bushmen and Khoikhoi can regard southern Africa as ancestral land.

If we disregard their claims, then whites have as much rights to ancestral lands as other blacks in much of South Africa, more in the Cape and Orange Free State and less in much of Transvaal and in nearly all of Natal, using Jan van Riebeeck's arrival as a convenient point in history. In a subtle way the present government seems to be rewriting history and in doing so could be guilty of injustice.

For some background, see Donald R. Morris, *The Washing of the Spears: A History of the Rise of the Zulu Nation under Shaka and Its Fall in the Zulu War of 1879* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965) and Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee, eds., *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840* (Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 1988).

Bert den Boggende,  
Brooks, AB

## Lobbying Synod

I appreciate all the work you do in putting together CC. You are covering a whole range of topics I find interesting.

Vicky Van Andel's column is prone to excesses. However she finally made a point that could be made in reverse. Female delegates to synod also have a choice not to attend. Likewise those wishing to campaign for this option could do it a lot easier if they would join like-minded people in denominations where this issue has been resolved to their liking.

To see Jubilee CRC give tax receipts for donations to fund the cost of "lobbying" synod during this clearly internal debate in the CRC makes a mockery of due process. Good news might be that the Canadian tax payer is partially funding the relevant ad in CC.

You can rest assured the media will report only the actions of this "lobby" group. But it will be a turn-off for many non-Christians and sadly may cause many CRC members to look elsewhere for their spiritual care without the help of a lobby group.

Somehow people on the extremes of both ends of a spectrum seem to want to behave like Greenpeace: bring out the protest signs, banners and get maximum media coverage regardless of the facts.

Harry Boessenkool,  
Surrey, B.C.

## When will Ontario end discrimination against educational minorities?

**Gerald Vandezande, C.M.**

Ian Urquhart, the *Toronto Star* provincial affairs columnist, correctly observed: "the debate was supposed to be over on that June day in 1984 when Premier Bill Davis rose to announce that his government planned to extend full funding to catholic schools." ("School funding controversy stirs again, *Toronto Star*, May 2, 2007) Urquhart continued: "But the debate never really ended. It just went underground for the better part of two decades."

Indeed, the Conservatives, Liberals and New Democrats then were in agreement on this controversial public justice issue. One key question I still have today: why should Catholics get "full funding for historical and constitutional reason, and no other religious groups were (are) entitled to public support for their schools"?

So, let's look at some basics and realities for the sake of legal equality and fiscal fairness for all, without discrimination.

Significantly, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on November 21, 1996, that the Ontario government is constitutionally permitted, but not obliged, to fund alternative and independent schools. The major political challenge before us now is to persuade Premier Dalton McGuinty to act boldly, deliver justice and end intolerance.

Clearly, ten years later, the challenge before Ontario citizens and politicians committed to equal educational justice to all parents and students is to persuade, once and for all, Premier Dalton McGuinty, Conservative Leader John Tory, and New Democratic Party leader Howard Hampton and their political associates to recognize both in law

and budget, the constitutional rights and bona fide aspirations of every other serious faith-community active in Ontario education.

The current blatant discrimination in political treatment is so inequitable that Ontario faces an embarrassing public scandal.

The Legislature's ongoing discrimination against minority educational communities violates both the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code, as well as the spirit and letter of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which declares in Article 26 (III): "Parents have the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children."

Surely, before 2007 ends, the Ontario Legislature can finally agree to respect its own Human Rights Code, which speaks of "public policy in Ontario...having as its aim the creation of a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person, so that each person feels a part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community and the Province." The Code guarantees "every person has a right to equal treatment without discrimination because of creed."

Surely, before 2008, Ontario's Liberals, with the active support of the Conservatives and the New Democrats, can finally muster the political courage to agree that educational justice must be done and that, therefore, all independent and alternative schools which meet mutually agreed-upon standards are legally entitled to non-discriminatory tax treatment.

Preferably, this could best be done as partners within a truly representative,

inclusive public education system, perhaps similar to the exemplary Edmonton model that respects religious/ideological diversity and real accountability.

Such all-party action by our MPPs would confirm that various faith-inspired schools with legitimate curriculum goals and staffed by hope- and love-filled teachers are entitled to public recognition and equitable treatment. We owe it to our young people to attempt to build a society in which mutual respect and mutual responsibility are viable alternatives.

All persons and all communities need a place to stand, public room to speak their mind, and the social space to live out their faith and values. They should be entitled to participate as equals in a free society in a more participatory, more representative democracy.

No political party with an awareness of the reality of diversity in our pluralistic society and with a sense of democracy based on equal justice for all would want to deny the human right and freedom of parents and students to choose the kind of education that best reflects their basic beliefs, aspirations, and goals in life. If the McGuinty government and the opposition parties have any religious sensitivity, they will insist on making educational justice a non-partisan issue to ensure freedom of religion and legal equality for all Ontario residents.

*Gerald Vandezande is the retired National Public Affairs Director of the Citizens for Public Justice and the former spokesperson for the Ontario Multi-Faith Coalition for Equity in Education. Gerald Vandezande C.M. 262 Pitfield Rd Toronto ON M1S 1Y7 Tel: 416-293-8912*

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## Opinion

# The Muslim Brotherhood: In the Shadow of the Koran (II)

*... (T)he issue of terrorist financing in the United States is a fundamental example of the shared infrastructure levered by Hamas, Islamic Jihad and al Qaeda, all of which enjoy a significant degree of cooperation and coordination within our borders. The common link here is the extremist Muslim Brotherhood – all these organizations are descendants of the membership and ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood.*

(Richard A. Clarke, before the Senate Banking Committee, Oct. 22, 2003)

In an open and free society, those who underestimate the evil of such men [as Khalid Sheik Mohammed, al Qaeda chief] become unwitting partners in crimes imagined and then perpetrated against the unwary and innocent citizens of that society.

(Salim Mansur, *Western Standard*, April 23, 2007)

## Harry Antonides

The jihadists, who preach and practise violence in the cause of Islam, have perfected the art of playing the bad cop/good cop routine. In that they are mightily assisted by the naivete and division within the West, including the U.S., which finds itself on the frontlines of the Western defences.

The confusion about the true nature of militant Islam was amply demonstrated in a story reported in a *Washington Post* (Sept. 11, 2004) article by John Mintz and Douglas Farah, "In Search of Friends Among the Foes." In May 2000, when Ishaq Farhan, a Jordanian leading opposition politician affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, disembarked in New York, he was extensively interrogated by federal agents, refused entry to the U.S. and ordered to return to Jordan.

But then U.S. Embassy officials in Jordan swung into action and effectively undid the security officials' work. A State Department representative personally delivered an immediate visa to Farhan as well the United States' "deep regret for the difficulties Dr. Farhan experienced."

## Conflicting signals

Sending conflicting signals by two different agencies of the same American administration is emblematic of a similar kind of confusion in the media about the nature of the enemy that has declared war on the free West. On the one side of this controversy are those who take seriously the threats against the free West by the Muslim Brotherhood and a slew of like-minded terrorist organizations.

On the other side are those who look for the "root cause" of the Muslim hatred toward us within the West itself. Furthermore, they believe that the Muslim Brotherhood has broken with its violent past and is now prepared to embrace democracy and pluralism. The authors of "In Search of Friends Among the Foes" summarize this dilemma well:

*FBI agents and financial investigators probe the group for terrorist ties and legal violations, while diplomats simultaneously discuss strategies for co-opting at least its moderate wings. In both sectors of the U.S. government, the Brotherhood often remains a mystery.*

How do we separate the moderates from the terrorists? This debate of late has come to

focus on the Muslim Brotherhood, described by Mintz and Farah as "a sprawling and secretive society with followers in more than 70 countries. It is dedicated to creating an Islamic civilization that harks back to the caliphates of the 7th and 8th century, one that would segregate women from public life and scorn nonbelievers."

However, the Brotherhood (Ikhwan in Arabic) has also claimed that it has renounced violence in favour of democratic politics and pluralism. (You can find those claims on its website: [www.ikhwanweb.info](http://www.ikhwanweb.info).) Should we believe them? Let's first consider the very informative *Washington Post* article by Mintz and Farah.



Muhammad Mahdi Akef

They write that the Brotherhood has instigated Islamic revolution in Egypt, Algeria, Syria and Sudan. In the Palestinian territories it has given birth to Hamas, which has sent its suicide bombers into Israel and is committed to the destruction of the Jewish state. The Brotherhood has not renounced that position toward Israel. (In fact, the Brotherhood's Supreme General Muhammad Mahdi Akef called for attacks in Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan in his weekly sermon on April 20.)

The authors show that the Brotherhood has ties to many Islamist extremists worldwide, involving training, financing and indoctrination through an extensive network of Islamist organizations. In the 1950s, the Brotherhood found refuge in Saudi Arabia, and there founded the largest Saudi charities, such as the Muslim World League in 1963 and the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in 1973.

## Global missionaries

Mintz and Farah explain: "Funded by petro dollars, they became global missionaries spreading the Saudis' austere and rigid Wahhabi school of Islam, whose

adherents at times describe all non-Wahhabis as infidels." In 1990, the Brotherhood fell out of favour and was denounced by Saudi prince Nayef as "the source of all problems in the Islamic world."

The authors name names and provide an overview of the multi-faceted activities of the Muslim Brotherhood worldwide and also in the U.S. Ali Ahmed, Washington-based activist closely associated with the Brotherhood, is quoted as saying that among their main goals were "carving out havens for Muslims, propagating Islam in America and backing Israel's destruction."

A U.S. official familiar with the federal investigation of former Brotherhood members stated that they had developed "a disciplined strategy, specific goals" to act on their plan to convert Americans, starting with U.S. military personnel, prison inmates and black people." The emphasis here is on patience in pursuing their goals.

In a 1995 speech to an Islamic conference in Ohio, Youssef Qaradawi, a top Brotherhood official and Qatari imam, predicted that victory will come through *dawah* – Islamic renewal and outreach. He assured his audience: "Conquest through *dawah* that is what we hope for.... We will conquer Europe, we will conquer America, not through the sword, but through *dawah*." (In his television program on Al-Jazeera in June 2004, Qaradawi said: "The democracy I call for is the democracy of Muslim society. It has fixed principles it does not violate, and red lines it cannot violate, and some principles that are not up for discussion.")

Mintz and Farah provide the sort of information that would make many of us conclude that the Muslim Brotherhood is a two-faced jihadist organization that in no way can be considered a possible ally in our struggle against radical Islam.

## Moderates or opportunists?

The impression given by Robert Leiken and Steve Brooke writing in the prestigious *Foreign Affairs* magazine ("The Moderate Muslim Brotherhood" – March-April 2007) is quite different. The tenor of their article is to discredit the critics of the Brotherhood and to assure us that the U.S. is making a serious mistake in not regarding this organization as an ally.

They write that the Brotherhood won the battle with its jihadist members and now is completely committed to "the path of toleration" and has found "democracy compatible with its notion of slow Islamization."

Leiken and Brooke allow for the possibility that the Brotherhood's commitment to democracy is no more than a tactical and transitory step – an opportunistic move to what Bernard Lewis has described as "one man, one vote, one time." But they hasten to assure us that the Brotherhood is not like that.

They tell us that on the basis of their

extensive discussions during the past year with dozens of Brotherhood leaders and activists from Egypt, France, Jordan, Spain, Syria, Tunisia, and the United Kingdom they have concluded that the Brotherhood has rejected "global jihad while embracing elections and other features of democracy." But the evidence they produce is mostly anecdotal and often based on the views of unnamed representatives and allies of the Brotherhood.

They write that the Brotherhood's anticipated way to power is not revolutionary but based on the strategy of "winning hearts through gradual and peaceful Islamization." They believe a "senior member" who assured them that it would be unjust for the Brotherhood to come to power without majority support.

Another spokesman told them that if the Brotherhood would obtain political power and then "should rule unwisely," it would deserve to be defeated. Mintz and Farah conclude this paragraph by saying that in their many conversations with the Brotherhood allies in the Middle East – no specific countries or names mentioned – they "heard many expressions of confidence that it would honour democratic processes."

The article wanders through the Brotherhood's various alleged mutations from jihadist to a trustworthy member of the respectable and peace-loving democratic family. They work hard at putting the best possible face on the Brotherhood policies, though it has never wavered from its position that Israel is illegitimate and the major stumbling bloc to peace in the Middle East.

Leiken and Brooke report that the Brotherhood is willing to recognize Israel's right to exist but only on the condition that Hamas must first agree to such recognition. The problem is that Hamas has steadfastly stuck to its determination to destroy Israel. In other words, the Brotherhood agrees with those who want to eliminate Israel, while hiding behind the skirts of Hamas, one of its own offspring and a fanatic terrorist organization that is a prime instigator of violence, murder and chaos in the Middle East.

The authors' declaration that the Brotherhood has renounced terrorism is accompanied by a caveat that in fact nullifies that declaration. They admit that it authorizes jihad in countries and territories "occupied" by a foreign power. Consequently, the Brotherhood considers the struggles in Iraq (read the murder of coalition forces and thousands of Iraqis) and against Israel as "defensive jihad" against invaders, a concept Leiken and Brooke describe as "the Muslim functional equivalent to the Christian doctrine of 'just war.'"

This is a short sampling of the arguments with which these authors seek to inform the public about the Brotherhood's internal politics and their policies in a number of host countries. The upshot of their advice to U.S. policy makers is that it makes strong

## Stewardship

strategic sense, on a case-by-case approach, to begin a conversation with the Muslim Brotherhood.

### Glossing over inconvenient facts.

The main problem with their advice is that they gloss over many clear indications that the Brotherhood's statements of their commitment to democracy and tolerance is no more than a tactical move to persuade a poorly informed public.

In any case, it is clear that those who clamour for the Islamization of a society, which means the application of sharia law, are really calling for the one-party-state, in this case the one-religion state. Such a state is fundamentally opposed to a free and open society. The late Brotherhood's Supreme Guide Mustafa Mashour put that in blunt language:

*Democracy contradicts and wages war on Islam. Whoever calls for democracy means they are raising banners contradicting God's plan and fighting Islam.*

Leiken and Brooke do not bother to explain to us the meaning of Al-Qaradawi's "red lines it cannot violate." Instead, their article creates confusion about the difference between fake moderate and real moderate Muslims.

That confusion has the result that real moderate Muslims are intimidated and ignored, and we are deprived of their much needed expertise and support. Let me conclude by giving voice to one of such Muslims who refuses to be intimidated, Zuhdi Jasser, a former U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander, a physician, and founder of the American Islamic Forum for Democracy:

*As a devout anti-Islamist American Muslim I have been struggling to explain to all those who will listen the central incompatibility of the Islamist doctrine with America's pluralist ideology. The literal Islamization of society, consciousness, and government, as advocated by the Muslim Brotherhood is an anathema to America as it is to a pluralistic and liberated Islam. Leiken and Brooke, in effect, whitewash an international organization whose mission is at odds with our own Constitutional system of governance.*

Harry Antonides  
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Zuhdi Jasser

### Correction – Would love to visit



This photo caption incorrectly identified Thanh as being pictured in the center with his family in the last issue (May 14 p.3). It is a picture of his father and family. Thanh would like to visit them.

Thanh is running a campaign to raise enough funds and Airmiles and Aeroplan miles to visit his father in the near future. To help with this project, please contact Thanh at [orphans75@gmail.com](mailto:orphans75@gmail.com).

*Our apologies*

## Steward leadership

Who do you think of when asked to think of a leader? I am sure that Winston Churchill or John Kennedy or Pope John Paul may come to mind for many of you. Trudeau is another name that media has been giving attention to lately. Is media hype following a human tendency to fawn upon our leaders or stars?

But really, what do you consider to be the characteristics of a good leader? What's on your list?

My list has God-fearing as the most important characteristic. I believe that a faith perspective impacts all the others. Consider the following characteristics of effective leaders:

- Integrity: "...If anyone sets his or her heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now an overseer must be above reproach...." (1 Timothy 3: 1b-2a)
- Respect: a leader can expect respect for his or her position, but more importantly a leader earns respect by wise and good leadership.
- Responsibility/Caring: a leader knows how to manage his or her own affairs well, has a track record of responsibility and is willing to take it on.
- Vision: a leader is not content with the status quo.
- Striving to add value to people: leaders do not strive to be a leaders, but rather they strive to add value to people, and when they do so, people will let them lead.
- Perseverance/"Stick-to-itness": A leader is a person who does not give up easily and gets tasks to completion. Mediocrity is not good enough!
- Flexibility/Willingness to learn/accept change: A leader asks, "What needs to be done? What can and should I do to make a difference?" A leader has a better end in mind and therefore is willing to change and learn.

As I reflect on this list, it sets the bar high. Who can measure up?

There are many examples of leaders in the Bible and each has his own leadership style. I think of Moses, King Saul, David and, of course, Jesus.

Some leadership styles are necessarily more autocratic, e.g., the captain of an airliner, while others need to be more consensus building, e.g., a designer or strategic planning team leader. I believe, however, that all leaders will benefit from learning a 'steward-leader' posture. It is a posture that recognizes their accountability for their leadership to God.

Let's look at the biblical example of Joseph. If you know the story well enough (Genesis 39-45) you'll be able to pick out all the characteristics listed above.

He wasn't long in Potiphar's service before Joseph became the most trusted steward of Potiphar's household. Joseph earned the respect of his master but also the lustful admiration of Potiphar's wife. Joseph's integrity was challenged when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him to lie with her. Though wrongfully accused and jailed, Joseph soon earned the trust and respect of his jailer and even the respect of his fellow prisoners who shared their stories with him. Joseph persevered and remained faithful even though he had to wait a long time for vindication. And when he was vindicated Joseph gave God the credit, for he knew it was God who had instilled in him a vision of what Pharaoh should do. Then, when his brothers came on the scene, Joseph carefully tested them. He could have sought retribution straight out – he did give them a rough time – but

### Reflections on Stewardship

Rick De Graaf

instead he wanted to be sure his brothers had learned from their mistakes and set in motion a period of contemplation, knowing that they would need to come back. Joseph sought to change his brothers for the better – to add value to them through learning and processing what they had done.

Joseph was able to see God's hand in it all and he was able to forgive. If anyone were justified to cry out, "Why Lord, why?" it was Joseph. Yet, he was able to forgive, to change his attitude and follow a God-given understanding about what his brothers had done to him. Joseph was a steward-leader extraordinaire!

A steward leader is a servant leader, a leader who recognizes God's supremacy. A steward is not a master, but has the master's best interest in mind. He or she is a responsible servant entrusted with God-given responsibility. Joseph exemplified this.

Whether you or I have very little or a lot that we are responsible for, we need to recognize that it is not really ours. It is God's. It is he who has entrusted it to us. As an owner or manager of a business, I am responsible for managing that business well; after all, the livelihood of all my employees as well as my own depend on my stewardship. But ultimately everything depends on God's hand of blessing.

As a Christian businessman or simply as an ordinary laborer, it's very comforting to know that my business or my employment is really God's. As a leader it is a privilege to lead; yet it is a responsibility that can be burdensome and stressful, especially when I think that I am on my own and that it all depends on me. A steward-leader, however, recognizes, as Joseph did, that God is really in charge and he cares. I'm responsible for doing my best, for being a faithful steward of all that God entrusts to my care.

**Stewardly Tip:** Spring clearout. As the shorts come out and the winter coats go back into storage, – it's a good time to cull the wardrobe. Get rid of the winter wear that didn't get worn much or that doesn't fit anymore and make a trip to the Thrift Store. Make room and let someone else benefit from your sharing.

**Readers:** Share your 'Stewardly Tips' so that we all can make better use of the resources God has entrusted to us. Submit your suggestions (by mail to *Christian Courier* or by email to my address below) and provide your contact information so that we can acknowledge your contribution or ask you for more details.

**Next issue:** Caloric excess

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**Church****Indian church council urges action after attacks on Christians****Anto Akkara**

Bangalore, India, (ENI) — The National Council of Churches in India has called on the authorities to act immediately to restore the rule of law, following a number of attacks against Christians in recent weeks.

The council urged state governments to clamp down on what it said were Hindu fundamentalist groups "responsible for fanning communal hatred and social tension."

The NCCI, which groups 29 Orthodox and Protestant churches, made its call in a May 9 statement that followed the beating up of two Christian evangelists the previous day in the Kolhapur district of Maharashtra state, in western India. Television footage showed a group of Hindus kicking and punching the pastors.

"I had to switch off the TV as the visuals were horrible," Bishop D. K. Sahu, the NCCI's general secretary, told Ecumenical News International from his office in Nagpur in central India.

Eleven people were arrested after the attack, The Associated Press reported.

More than 20 cases of serious attacks on church personnel have been reported in the past four weeks. The NCCI described the incidents as being of "major concern to all law-abiding Christians in the country".

The Evangelical Fellowship of India, in a statement, condemned the latest attacks. The evangelists, named as pastors Ajit and Ramesh, had been conducting a baptism ceremony for seven people in a local river when they were set upon. Their attackers accused the evangelists of forcibly converting poor Hindus, the Dailyindia.com news service reported.

After the assaults, the assailants took the two pastors to a local police station, where they were charged with "unlawful religious conversions." Police initially refused to take any action against the attackers, Bishop Sahu said.

**A boat-load of Bibles....****Paul Hattaway**

On May 8, Doug Sutphen, who was better-known and loved around the world as "Brother David," passed away in a hospital near his home in North Bend, Washington. He was 70-years-old.

Doug Sutphen is best remembered for leading the audacious "Project Pearl" in 1981 — when one million Chinese Bibles, weighing 232 tons, were delivered by barge to thousands of waiting Christians on a beach in southern China. *Time* magazine described it as "a remarkable mission — the largest operation of its kind in the history of China." Many Chinese church leaders today say that Project Pearl was a pivotal moment in their history. The Church had only started to re-emerge after decades of brutal oppression, and the desperate need of believers everywhere was for Bibles. A quarter of a century later reports are still being received of the tremendous impact those Bibles had on whole communities. Chinese Christians consider Project Pearl a key event which contributed greatly to the mighty revival presently sweeping the world's most populous nation.

Doug Sutphen's life experienced a dramatic change when he accepted Jesus Christ during a Billy Graham crusade on September 4, 1963. The change in his life was immediately evident, and he never wavered in his commitment to know and make known the Lord Jesus to as many people as possible. In May 1965 he commenced his missionary career in the Philippines. Sutphen had joined the FEBC (Far East Broadcasting Company), becoming the head of the printing department which produced and distributed millions of Bibles and Gospel tracts throughout Asia.

**Russian Orthodox Church reconciles after 80 years**

MOSCOW — A branch of the Russian Orthodox church whose members fled over 80 years ago to escape Bolshevik rule has been reunited with the mother church in Moscow.

The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad was formed by exiled supporters of the Tsar Nicholas II, who was murdered by the Bolsheviks. They subsequently split from the church in Moscow because it had fallen under the sway of the Communist party.

In a ceremony on May 17, the church abroad ended its long estrangement by signing a document restoring its severed link with the church in Moscow.

Even for the majority of Russians who know little about religious affairs, the symbolism of their country reconnecting with its pre-revolutionary past has a powerful appeal.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said, "This is a truly epoch-making event in the life of the church and in the life of our society as well."

Mr. Putin supported the reconciliation between the two churches and attended the ceremony, along with members of the Romanov family, Russia's former ruling dynasty. It was held at the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, which was dynamited by Stalin in 1931 and rebuilt in the 1990s. Church members called the signing, on the feast of Ascension, a confirmation of the Russian Orthodox Church's central role in post-Soviet society.

"One of the most grave consequences of the 1917 revolution, the civil war and the Cold War is being overcome," said Father Vsevolod Chaplin, deputy chairman of the Moscow's church's department for external church relations. "All of the heritage that was preserved by the church abroad ... is being returned to Russia."

In an interview broadcast on a state-run news channel,

*Alexy II and Laurus*

Patriarch Aleksei II of the Russian Orthodox Church said "The Lord is helping us in this time, this time of spiritual revival, to gather up the stones that were so thoughtlessly scattered in the past."

On Saturday, Patriarch Alexiy II and Metropolitan Laurus, the New York-based leader of the church abroad, will jointly consecrate a new church in southern Moscow built on the site where the Soviet secret police executed thousands of priests and monarchists.

Putin's quest to reunite the churches is consistent with his effort to consolidate the power and legitimacy of the current Russian state, said Nikolai Mitrokhin, a scholar who studies the Russian Orthodox Church and its relations with the Kremlin. "The role of Putin is indeed great in this respect since Putin is striving to demonstrate himself and today's Russian power as the legal heirs of both the Soviet and the White period of history," he said, referring to the anti-Communist side in the Russian civil war.

In the late 1960s Sutphen received a call from God to provide Bibles to the Church in China. China at the time was in the midst of the Cultural Revolution, and its borders were sealed to all outside influence. Most of the missionaries Sutphen shared his call with thought he was crazy, or naive, but this Gospel warrior soldiered on, and he was finally able to get a visa and enter China in 1976. In 1979 a few Christian ministries began to carry Bibles into China from Hong Kong. By now Sutphen had joined Open Doors, adopting the name "Brother David," in order to protect his identity. Despite leading teams of Bible-carrying Christians into China, which resulted in the successful delivery of more than 30,000 Bibles, Sutphen saw that the needs of the Chinese Church were vast, and that carrying Bibles by hand would never be able to meet the demand. After much prayer with several key colleagues, the plan for "Project Pearl" was born.

Operating under a cloak of secrecy because of the highly-sensitive nature of the work, Sutphen and his team worked closely with house church leaders inside China and settled on the bold and risky plan to take one million Bibles into China by boat, all at once. Starting with no money or resources, God provided everything needed and the delivery was successfully completed in the evening of June 18, 1981.

More than 10,000 Chinese believers gathered along a beach near the city of Shantou in southern China, and took the one million Bibles away in trucks, cars, donkey carts, on bicycles, and strung across bamboo poles. The army arrived at the beach several hours after the delivery, but the vast majority of Bibles (at least 90 per cent) had been successfully moved by the Chinese Christians.

Later, the Three-Self church and others tried to denounce Project Pearl by claiming all the Bibles had been confiscated or swept out to sea, but this was not true. Within weeks, Project Pearl Bibles had made their way to hungry believers in 18 different provinces, and letters of overwhelming gratitude poured in from Christians who had received their first copy of God's Word.

The whole of Project Pearl, and indeed Doug Sutphen's life from the time of his conversion, was focused on seeking first the kingdom of God. For decades he received no salary, and mentioned his personal needs only to God, and never to people. God responded to his faith in a marvelous way, and the Sutphens never lacked what they needed. In 1981 the inspirational story of "Brother David" up to that point was told in the best-selling book, *God's Smuggler to China*.

When religious restrictions started to ease in the early 1990s, Sutphen traveled to China and asked the government-sanctioned Amity Press to print Bibles for the unregistered house churches. Many were shocked to see this man, who had in some people's eyes been the champion of "Bible smuggling", now engaging the official church. He was strongly criticized in some quarters, but what mattered most to him was that God's Word would get into the hands of Chinese believers. How they got there was of secondary importance to him. In the first 3 years Sutphen was able to oversee the distribution of an additional 1.1 million Bibles to Chinese Christians, most of them members of house church fellowships.

For the full article, see <http://www.persecutedchurch.com/>

## Church

Cathedral of Christ the Savior



### Moscow's Victory Day underscores church-military relationship

**Sophia Kishkovsky**

Moscow (ENI) – Church bells rang across Russia on May 9 as Russians marked the 62nd anniversary of their victory over Nazi Germany in the Second World War.

Victory Day is marked with special prayers in Russian Orthodox churches, and other ceremonies in recent days also underscored the church's participation in this day revered by most Russians.

"Among our people, reverence for fallen soldiers has always been present, and their sacrificial act of bravery was honoured as a heroism in the name of saving the Fatherland," said Patriarch Alexei II when he laid a wreath the previous day at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the foot of the Kremlin wall.

In comments reported on the Web site [www.sedmitza.ru](http://www.sedmitza.ru), which is affiliated with the Moscow Patriarchate, Alexei also condemned a decision by the Estonian government to relocate a Soviet war memorial away from the capital, Tallinn. "I think revising history is the most ignoble deed," he said. "That which began in Estonia and continued in Poland is an insult to the sentiments of thanks and eternal memory worthy of those soldiers who gave their lives defending the peoples

of Europe from fascism."

In the post-Soviet era, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian military have developed a close relationship that is promoted as a means of encouraging patriotism and discouraging the bullying of recruits that plagues the armed forces.

The commander of Russia's nuclear-armed Strategic Rocket Forces, Colonel General Nikolai Solovtsov, has said cooperation with the Russian Orthodox Church and other religions "will serve towards the further enrichment of the spiritual and moral life of military servicemen."

Writing in *Foma*, a popular Russian Orthodox magazine whose May edition is devoted to military-related subjects, Solovtsov noted that 15 Orthodox churches and chapels have been built in recent years to serve military towns.

"The centuries-old history of Russia and its armed defence confirm the fact that without a high level of spirituality and respect for our history and traditions, that is without a unifying idea, there cannot be a strong army capable of defending the Fatherland and the interests of its people," wrote Solovtsov.

### Malaysia churches urge government rethink on interfaith meeting

Kuala Lumpur (ENI) – The Council of Churches of Malaysia has appealed to the country's government to reconsider a decision to withdraw support for a Christian-Muslim seminar that was to have been chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.

The May 7-11 seminar was cancelled after the authorities said they would not support its taking place, the church council noted in a May 10 statement. The council said it was "at a loss" to understand the decision.

"The Council of Churches had hoped that such a seminar would have gone a long way in pursuing the path of respectful dialogue, and strengthen our country's claim to be a viable venue to host such global interfaith dialogues," the council's general secretary, the Rev. Hermen Shastri, said.

The meeting was to have been the sixth in

a series of annual seminars that have met in places such as London, New York, Qatar and Sarajevo. Shastri urged the government "to review its decision and offer the organizers an alternative date" for a meeting in Malaysia.

In Britain, *The Times* newspaper reported that the Malaysian government had allowed the archbishop of Canterbury into the country to preach at the consecration of a new Anglican bishop, but had said that it would not permit the seminar to take place.

In 2004, Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi told a World Council of Churches gathering in Kuala Lumpur that interfaith dialogue was essential.

The prime minister's office and Islamic institutions had originally welcomed the seminar as being "consistent with the government's emphasis on encouraging

### Vietnam sentences Christian activists to prison terms

**Elizabeth Kendal**

On Friday May 11, the Hanoi People's Court sentenced Christian religious liberty advocate and human rights lawyer Nguyen Van Dai (38) to five years imprisonment to be followed by four years of house arrest. Dai's colleague, lawyer Le Thi Cong Nhan (28), was sentenced to four years imprisonment to be followed by three years of house arrest.

Both lawyers were arrested on 6 March and charged with propagandising against the state of Vietnam. According to official Vietnamese media, the court found Dai and Nhan guilty of using Dai's Thien An law office since 2006 for the purpose of spreading libellous propaganda against the state of Vietnam in violation of Article 88 of the Criminal Code.

Ben Stocking (in Hanoi for Associated Press) reports that Dai denied he had broken any laws, saying he had merely exercised his right to free expression and association.

The Constitution of Vietnam states: "The citizen shall enjoy freedom of opinion and speech, freedom of the press, the right to be informed, and the right to assemble, form associations and hold demonstrations in accordance with the provisions of the law."

However, Article 88 of the Criminal Code which makes it illegal to 'conduct propaganda against the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam', can be wielded to severely restrict these Constitutional rights, rendering them illusory. As Stocking notes: "Before their March 6 arrests, Dai and Nhan provided human rights training to Vietnamese students. Dai also represented ethnic minorities who were members of Protestant faiths."

#### Demonization

The Vietnamese regime has done a thorough job of demonizing religious liberty advocate and human rights lawyer Nguyen van Dai. The day before Lawyer Dai's trial, a press release was issued by the Vietnam News Agency's News for Foreign Service Department that condemned Dai as an extremist, a radical, and an associate of terrorists, whose "slanderous

and libellous information" [that Vietnam is violating its religious liberty obligations] threatened Vietnam's socio-economic progress and development. Further to that, the day after the trial the authorities published condemnations of Dai procured from local Vietnamese Christian leaders.



Nguyen Van Dai

In its pretrial press release the government news agency condemned the men as radicals who threatened the stability and prosperity of the state. "This group has allegedly conspired with criminals and even terrorist organizations responsible for kidnappings, bombings and assassinations to undo much of the progress the country has made in building a strong, secure and democratic society."

It charged that Nguyen van Dai "abused the right to freedom of speech by posting information on the internet and giving interviews to overseas Vietnamese-owned radio stations where he painted a biased and distorted picture of the country and its internal affairs." Alleging that Dai received funds from "reactionary organizations in the US", the press release charges that "the money, in large part, was used to fund a scam where the 'Viet Nam Committee for Human Rights' group offered law school students scholarships to study in Bangkok, Thailand. There, they attended 'education' workshops run by anti-Government elements operating inside the country."

"Dai had instructed staff from his Thien An law office to travel to northwestern, Central Highlands and southern provinces to contact Protestant clergymen and their followers who have shown hatred towards the Government, according to the source."

"Together they compiled 'evidence of Viet Nam's suppression of the Protestant religion' and gave it to the US-based Committee for Religious Freedom in Viet Nam and to the US Embassy in Viet Nam. Officials said their findings were doctored, distorted or fabricated to further the aims of Dai and his organization."

The pre-trial press release ends with words of assurance, words that demonstrate the trial was actually over before it began: "...the law will not allow a tiny minority to harm the interests of what the vast majority believe in as a nation and as a people." On the day after the trial, the government-run Vietnam News Agency was doubtless delighted to report that various Christian leaders were prepared to condemn religious liberty advocate and human rights lawyer Nguyen van Dai.

It is possible that the clergymen quoted were approached for their opinion, and that had they failed to condemn Dai upon request they would have been detained and interrogated, stripped of 'privileges', put under surveillance and persecuted. However, hostile totalitarian regimes usually have compliant clergy at their disposal, clergy they can rely on to deliver the required pro-government propaganda in exchange for privileges such as non-interference, protection and promotion.

According to 2000 census figures, Muslims make up about 60 percent of Malaysia's 24 million people. About 9 percent are Christians, 19 percent Buddhists, and 6 percent Hindus.

## Review

# The Canadian CRC through Dutch eyes

Agnes Amelink, *Gereformeerden overzee. Protestants-Christelijke Landverhuizers in Noord-Amerika.*

Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2006. 301 pages.

Reviewed by Gerry Gerrits

In 2001 Agnes Amelink, a journalist with the Dutch Christian daily *Trouw*, published a popular history of the various *Gereformeerde* denominations that emerged in The Netherlands in the 19th and 20th century, beginning with the secession from the Dutch Reformed Church in 1834. By 2003, this work had been reprinted seven times. A daughter of a minister in the *Gereformeerde Kerk* (liberated), Amelink knows the scene well and has an obvious love for the religious tradition she grew up in, which does not mean that she is blind to its weaknesses, peculiarities, idiosyncrasies and oddities. The success of her first book, as well as knowledge of and love for the subject, appears to have prompted her, and her publisher, to write and publish a similar work on the *Gereformeerden* in North America in all of its variations, and together the two books constitute very much of a whole.

While the American churches receive the necessary attention, most of the book is devoted to the churches in Canada, and that is not surprising in that the Canadian churches, being essentially a product of the post-World War II emigration wave, felt the effects of the developments in the *Gereformeerde* denominations in The Netherlands much more strongly than did their American counterparts. Furthermore, since the Christian Reformed Church is considerably larger than any of the other Reformed denominations of Dutch origin in Canada, the entire book is devoted to that denomination, except for one chapter (Chapter 11) in which Amelink deals with the Canadian Reformed, Reformed (RCA) and Free Reformed denominations.

Amelink's interest in the *Gereformeerden* in North America stems in part, we may assume, from the fact that in 1952 her father received a call from the Lethbridge-Coaldale Canadian Reformed Church, the oldest congregation of this denomination in Canada. It was a call which, in the end, her father did not accept, but as she travelled about in Canada and the U.S., visiting with and talking to representatives of the various *Gereformeerde* denominations, Amelink must have realized that had her father accepted the call at that time, she would not have been unlike her interviewees.

Amelink manages to hold the reader's attention with a healthy mix of narrative, spiced with anecdotes, and analysis. While she admittedly regards and treats the CRC in the U.S. and Canada as one denomination, her guiding theme throughout the book is that the American and Canadian halves of the CRC trace their roots back to related but, nonetheless, quite distinctive traditions and influences: the CRC in the U.S. to the Secession from the Dutch Reformed Church (*Afscheiding*) in 1834, and the CRC in Canada to the Secession from the Dutch Reformed Church (*Doleantie*) in 1886. She characterizes the seceders of 1834 as pietists, and those of 1886 as activists: as Kuyperian activists. The pietists, she elucidates, concentrated – and continue to concentrate – on keeping the world at a distance, while the Kuyperian activists aim to win over society for their views and convictions. The result was that in the U.S., the 19th century Dutch immigrants drew up their wagons in a circle, as did the Dutch immigrants in Canada following World War II, but whereas the former did so almost exclusively for defensive purposes, the latter did so with a strong and determined offensive aim in mind, although amongst them the defensive element was, admittedly, not lacking. This dichotomy, Amelink asserts, has in the past led to a certain degree of misunderstanding and friction between the American and Canadian wings of the CRC: the Americans not understanding the driven activism



of the Canadians, and the Canadians not understanding the American reluctance to join them in their mission, or 'crusade' as it has been called.

Having sketched this rather fundamental divide between the American and Canadian branches of the CRC – and, needless to say, what the author asserts about the differences between the two are generalizations – Amelink illustrates how this difference has manifested, and continues to manifest, itself in a variety of ways.

A good example of this is the language question. In America, the CRC continued to use Dutch into the first decades of the 20th century, and even later in some instances, as a means of fighting secular influences. In fact, it was a not unknown phenomenon in the U.S. in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that the degree of orthodoxy in the CRC was measured by the extent to which the Dutch language had been maintained. In Canada, by contrast, the CRC switched to English at the first opportunity, for that was one of the first requirements if one were to carry out one's Christian mandate as envisioned by the Kuyperians. Drawing on their experience in The Netherlands, they saw it as their mandate to build an 'edifice' comprising a number of 'pillars' such as Christian schools, labour organization, media and political party, all of which were to serve one's own community *and*, just as importantly, to act as catalysts for the 'reformation' of Canadian society. For even if most immigrants with a *Gereformeerden* background came to Canada for economic reasons first and foremost, the conviction, held by many, that it was their duty to serve as Christianizing catalysts in Canadian society was no less a reality.

Perhaps one can speak of a 'Kuyperian burden' here, in the sense that Rudyard Kipling spoke, more than a century ago, of 'the white man's burden' with respect to the uncivilized: i.e., the non-European, world. The post-World-War-II Canadian immigrants, then, came on a mission, while the 19th century American immigrants had come, in part, to escape religious persecution and oppression in The Netherlands and to find a safe haven away from the turmoil and spiritual dangers of this world. Having left The Netherlands before the Kuyperian worldview was formulated and made its impact felt in The Netherlands, the 19th century American immigrants and their descendants were little influenced by it. One consequence of the absence of that influence, for example, was that they did not keep church and school separate as advocated by the Kuyperian-Dooyeweerdian sphere philosophy.

While the conviction was there that they had a mission to fulfil in Canada, most of the immigrants, as Amelink points out, had relatively little education and were not used to assuming leadership roles. However, starting in the early

1960s, and perhaps earlier, young Canadian students began arriving at Calvin College, and there a number of them fell under the spell of Professor Evan Runner who, although not of Dutch background, had absorbed the Kuyperian-Dooyeweerdian philosophy and had become an avid advocate of its principles. That, as Amelink points out, made him an outsider at Calvin College, as is corroborated by Henry Stob in his autobiography entitled *Summing Up Remembrance*. And it was perhaps a shared feeling of being 'outsiders' that brought Runner and the Canadian students together. Runner's 'disciples' were to set the tone at the Toronto Institute for Christian Studies, founded in 1967, and they also endeavoured, in

general, to set the tone and provide direction and leadership for the CRC community and its efforts to serve as a Christian catalysts for Canadian society.

However, as Amelink learned from the interviews she conducted, the tactics – and increasingly the views and aims – of these "young dogs" (*jonge honden*), as she calls them, offended not only the conservative American CRC 'establishment', but also increasingly alienated a large percentage of the Canadian CRC membership, the older rank and file members in particular. For many church members the 1970 publication *Out of Concern for the Church*, a pretty strong condemnation of the existing mentality and conditions in the CRC combined with a radical Kuyperian call to arms by members of the AAC (Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, the parent body of the Institute for Christian Studies), was a defining moment, causing them to draw back from the Kuyperian mission, or at least compelling them to re-evaluate their position.

This stepping back and re-evaluation process was dictated, in part at least, by the realization that the financial cost of even attempting to make the Kuyperian vision a reality would be overwhelming. Consequently, starting in the early 1970s, the Kuyperian mission, as Amelink sees it, started to come under attack, or came increasingly to be questioned. This was in reaction not only to what was seen by many as too aggressive and abrasive an attitude and approach by the AAC and its supporters, but there were also other forces at work here such as a growing generational gap between those raised in The Netherlands and their Canadian-reared children, an accelerating cultural assimilation of a considerable segment of the CRC membership, *and*, according to Amelink, a growing American, pietistic influence in the Canadian CRC. In fact, it is to this pietistic element that Amelink attributes a major controversy that flared up, around 1970, at the Toronto District Christian High School over J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. She describes this event, its background, causes and fall-out, in a chapter that she gives the title of the controversial novel in question.

By, the early 1970s, then, the earlier unity that had characterized the Canadian wing of the CRC and its objectives had been partly shattered, and *The Catcher in the Rye* incident seems to have been indicative of things to come. For throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and later, there were growing tensions within the CRC over various issues between a more progressive wing on the one hand and a growing conservative wing on the other. The issues that caused a growing divide had to do, amongst others, with women in office, liturgical practices, the question of what constitutes faithfulness to the Gospel and its message

## Fiction

# Miss Budge in love

Daphne Simpkins

Mildred Budge was sitting in the balcony of the old Empire theatre downtown trying to quietly stamp her tingling left foot awake when the lady beside her complained, "My hiney has gone to sleep."

"My foot has," Miss Budge replied companionably.

"But doesn't Debbie Reynolds look good?" The woman added.

Miss Budge nodded. Debbie Reynolds did sparkle in a blue sheath dress, and she still sang with all of the gusto of the unsinkable Molly Brown.

Mildred Budge hummed along as Miss Reynolds crooned her signature hit that closed the special evening concert, "Tammy's In Love."

Dull eyes sparkled even more then. Cold hearts already warmed by the nostalgia of Miss Reynolds' career retold in music grew warmer still. Then, as people applauded and stood up, Mildred Budge also rose, and began the awkward task of clambering over the chubby knees of the lady with the hibernating hiney who said, "I can't move yet. You go on."

It wasn't easy. Mildred's left foot was still asleep, and her best navy church-going skirt was tighter tonight than ever before. Growing older was hard, but gaining weight was easy.

Miss Budge had just found her footing in the center aisle when a nearby gentleman suddenly hit the carpeted floor face first. Miss Budge crossed immediately to his side and knelt down. His skin was clammy, his breathing raspy. Cradling the man's head up against her ample bosom, she spoke as if she were still a school teacher whose job it was to call the class to order, "Someone call an ambulance, please."

When she spoke, the man's gray eyes popped open.

Oh, how the man's scared gaze triggered memories for Miss Budge of taking care of her daddy when he had been terminally ill. This dear fellow wore the same type of white cotton shirt her daddy had liked and which she had always laundered specially. His Old Spice cologne was ripe in the air, for the poor man had broken out into a flop

sweat that signaled a serious inner discord.

"Don't try to get up just yet," Mildred said, as his eyes flickered, searching for more help – for meaning. What was happening to him?

The gentleman did not know that he had fallen into the arms of a church lady whose whole nature and body had been waking up to new unctions to pray with more and more of her whole self all the time.

On Miss Budge's morning constitutionals she often fought the urge to fall to her knees on warming asphalt to pray for people driving to work and for teenagers going to school. And at home when the phone rang with a prayer chain request, Miss Budge usually collapsed to her knees before she could hang up the phone.

But in that moment at the Empire Theatre, Miss Budge wanted to offer her body as a healing place for the man with the scared gray eyes. Instantly, prayers from her inner Miss Budge left her soul like spontaneously created love songs – composed not only for the man but because of all the people Miss Budge had ever loved.

Prayer was like that. The experiences of a lifetime often came together to create the prayer of the moment for someone in need.

And as the prayers left her in groans too deep for spoken words, Miss Budge crooned to the man, "It's all right. You'll be all right."

The sweating eased. His fear diminished. He blinked. Smiled self-consciously. And then he sat up.

As the sound of a siren approached, the crowd murmured, "The poor fellow must have fainted. That's all. What's with that crazy woman who won't let go of him?" A stranger clucked behind her, "Old women will be the death of us all."

Someone finally took a solid grip on Mildred's elbows and hoisted her up to her feet. She stepped back while others moved in to ask his name – he knew it – and where he lived – he said it – and who was with him. "I'm alone," he said.

The announcement of his aloneness startled people, but Mildred Budge knew the truth: he wasn't alone.

No one was alone, but there were still too many people who didn't know that the God of creation was waiting for them, crooning to them, calling out in love, "Come to me and be healed – find rest."

She looked around. The field was ripe for harvest, and Miss Budge breathed her, "Save-them-Jesus" prayer that was like a love song that played inside of her all the time. Miss Budge had been in love with God for most of her life. Like Debbie Reynolds, she had a lot of music in her. Miss Budge hummed more of it as she slipped out the back door and made her way to the street.

Outside, the evening was cool and starlit, the air fragrant with magnolia and honeysuckle. The concrete sidewalk pulsed with stored sunshine, and Miss Budge stopped for a moment to absorb with gratitude the sweetness of being alive and to watch as the paramedics went inside and then came out alone.

"Thank you, Jesus," she said automatically.

Other concert goers passed her by, barely seeing her in the dark except to notice that she was another one of those older women who always seems to be talking to herself and fidgeting for keys while wondering where it was exactly that she had parked her car.



## The Canadian CRC ....continued from p.10

and, more recently, the place of homosexuals in the church. This progressive versus conservative divide swept the entire CRC, in Canada as well as in the U.S., and on both sides of the border the conservatives gave voice to their concerns in their own publications: *Christian Renewal* in Canada, and *Torch and Trumpet* (later renamed *Outlook*) in the U.S. And, as Amelink points out, over it all hung the spectre of the history, since the 1960s, of the *Gereformeerde Kerk* in The Netherlands. It was this very spectre that seems to have played a role in some CRC congregations, or segments thereof, separating themselves from the CRC denomination and that ended up, not surprisingly, in creating their own: the United Reformed Church.

And what of the Kuyprian vision and mission at the beginning of the 21st century? As Amelink observes, the "young dogs" who some thirty to forty years ago took the lead in making the vision a reality are now senior citizens who succeeded only partly in their mission. Even in areas where the mission has been relatively successful there is a constant struggle going on between maintaining one's principles at the cost of growth and expansion and (partly) surrendering those principles for the sake of growth and perhaps a wider, but diluted, influence. In this connection Amelink examines and discusses in particular the history, and prospects, of Christian education in Canada, including the ICS, and the CLAC, both of which she portrays as having made their impact felt outside their own community to a greater or lesser degree. Less successful, she points out,

have been the attempts to create a Christian daily and political party and to make them catalysts for change in Canadian society. The work done by Citizens for Public Justice has perhaps had a greater influence and impact than Amelink is aware of and attributes to it. Needless to say, the controversies – as briefly sketched in the previous paragraph – that started to consume the CRC in the 1970s were detrimental to the larger Kuyprian vision and mission.

In summary, the conclusion one can draw from Amelink's book is that the ring of wagons, so carefully and determinedly drawn up during the 1950s and 1960s, has been breached from within as well as from without. What Amelink is, in effect, saying is that the Kuyprian vision and activism of just a few decades ago has lost much – if not most – of its urgency, strength and drive in a relatively short time notwithstanding, for example, the recent creation of a special chair in Dooyeweerdian studies at Redeemer University College. She does not go as far as to say that the pietistic strain, or element, in the Canadian CRC has triumphed over the Kuyprian, activist element: in other words, that the *Afscheiding* has triumphed over the *Doleantie*, but one can read as much between the lines, if one wishes to do so.

The themes discussed in the previous paragraphs constitute the unifying principles of Amelink's book, the ones around which she has woven her narrative about the *Gereformeerden* in Canada and, to a lesser degree, about those in the U.S. Much, and perhaps most, of what she writes about,

including the emigration and immigration experience, is more than familiar to those who have been members of the CRC for the past forty, fifty, or more years. However, it is to the interested Dutch readership that the book is, in the first place, directed, but all those interested in, and wanting to learn something about, the CRC can read this book with profit because of the story it tells and its insights, provided, of course, that they have a reading knowledge of the Dutch language. For in response to my question to her about having the book translated into English, Amelink's reply was that her publisher does not regard that as financially feasible.

It ought perhaps to be reiterated, before we conclude, that the book is more accessible – in fact it is an 'easy read' – than the foregoing review may suggest. As a journalist, Amelink knows how to write for the general reading public and keep the readers interested. Finally, it has been said that any good book should enlighten the reader about her or himself, and that is what Amelink's book has done for this reviewer of her work. It helped me to understand, and put in perspective, my personal reaction to the Kuyprian vision and mission (Bernard Zylstra spoke a number of times at Queen's University, Kingston, in the late 1960s when I was a graduate student there), one that perhaps stems from the fact that as *Gereformeerden* my family traces its history back to the *Afscheiding* rather than to the *Doleantie*.

*Gerry Gerrits is a professor in the History and Classics Department of Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia*

**Mission**

# *Out of reverence for God*

A personal account of one of these la-die-da mission trips, right?

## Bert Witvoet

It all started for me and my wife, Alice, when Marc and Dora Strooboscher told a group of seniors at our church about a South Africa project. Marc and Dora are a retired teacher couple, originally from the Smithville area, and they have been deeply involved in the development of the Theocentric Christian College, a K to 12 school in the Limpopo province of South Africa. They had gone to Limpopo twice already, each time spending weeks helping teachers in their curriculum development. This time they were talking about going back for a third time and planning a teachers conference for several Christian schools and their teachers. I don't remember whether they asked me outright if I was interested in being part of that effort, or whether they cast a meaningful glance my way as if to say, how come you're not joining us? All I know is that something stirred in me and made me examine myself for reasons to go (need and usefulness) or not to go (health and cost).

At the time of their presentation, Samson Makhado was in town to urge Canadians of Reformed persuasion to lend a helping hand to struggling black Christian schools in South Africa. I knew Samson from years ago when he studied at the Institute for Christian Studies. At that time, he had been sponsored by a Christian school teacher from Belleville, Ontario – Henny Slopsema. He spoke glowingly of this woman's sacrificial work in South Africa, and he challenged me and others to bring our experience and knowledge of Christian education to South Africa.

## The participants

And so it was that Alice and I, and another couple from Brighton, Ontario, Ike and Jennie Witteveen, agreed to join Dora and Marc

Pictures from left to right

Teachers at the conference meet to discuss questions raised at a workshop.

Ike Witteveen (standing left) and Marc Strooboscher gave a workshop at the teachers conference on classroom management. Principal Edward Lidzhegu listens intently.

Students at Theocentric Christian College line up for devotions in front of staff and visitors.



The eight team members plus a conferee pose in their Venda costumes: From left to right, back row: Marc and Dora Strooboscher, Conferee Nelly, Jennie and Ike Witteveen, Peter Roukema, Peter Van Huizen. Front row: Alice and Bert Witvoet.

Strooboscher in planning and executing a teachers conference in the northern province of South Africa where the Venda and the Tsonga (also known as Shangaan) people reside. We knew that two more educators from British Columbia would be in the area at that time – Peter Van Huizen and Peter Roukema. And so they, too, became part of the upcoming conference. The conference was to be held from March 26 till March 30. After that, the Ontario contingent was to spend weeks in the schools working with teachers. The two Peters from B.C. would already have done their in-house training with teachers before the conference. In addition to working with teachers, we were hoping to establish a library for Theocentric Christian College. The two non-educators – Jennie and Alice – would spearhead that effort. They are highly competent administrators who took time to learn about the Dewey Decimal classification system, that is used worldwide.

Before we left for South Africa, we Ontarians held a book drive in our respective communities. As a result, we collected more than 2,000 books. These were shipped to South Africa by two Smithville Christian schools: Covenant Christian School and Smithville District Christian High. These two schools, have maintained a vital link with Theocentric Christian College over the past

three years. Smithville high school students and teachers have traveled to Theocentric and have spent time building a *lappa* – a roof structure without walls. In addition to having financed library furniture this year, the Smithville schools

are also planning to send another group of students next year to finish the *lappa* and they will bring along a computer lab. This amazing partnership all started when Marc Strooboscher was principal of S.D.C.H. But enough about Smithville schools and their exemplary dedication to spreading the good news of Christian education to a third-world section of South Africa. In this column, I intend to write about the experiences of the G-8 (eight grasshoppers) from Canada at the foot of the giant Soutpan mountains.

## Trivial matters

I won't bore you with details about frogs invading the Witvoet cottage every night (a stubborn left-over from the Egyptian plague?), or the fact that the Witteveen cottage was built on stilts and had floors with slats spaced apart wide enough to allow for ventilation and insects. Nor will I dwell on the fact that schools start at 7:30 a.m. and, since we lived an hour's drive from the schools we visited, sometimes a two-hour drive, we had to get up before the sun rose, though never before two roosters crowded on our farm. Many a time we came home again after the sun had set, thus missing the fine spectacle of a South African sunset over the lake that our cottages overlooked. The bosboks and lemurs did not bother us

as we slept, though we did sometimes hear strange sounds in the night. The owner of our cottages assured me that it was probably *nag aapies* (night monkeys) that we heard scurrying on the roof. They are small nocturnal creatures that you would probably never catch a glimpse of. Walking outside in the dark did not appeal to us too much with the knowledge that wild pigs, velvet monkeys and baboons would also be making the rounds. Did I mention that crocodiles and hippos inhabited sections of the lake? I did say something about an Egyptian plague a while ago ... you should see the size of locusts that landed near us from time to time! But the colourful birds that flitted from branch to branch in nearby bushes kept us spellbound with wonder. Termites anyone? The towering mounds were all around us, providing the local population with a delicacy not to be despised. I limited my incursion into that indigenous diet to three baked caterpillars.

South Africa is a lush and fertile land in this northern, subtropical section of South Africa. But all of that is sideshow to the real purpose of our visit – working alongside black South African teachers, and spreading the good news that Christian education is education for service on this God-given earth, so that the hopes and aspirations of our Creator God for his handiwork can be realized through us.

## The need

One of the main focal points of our visit was the four-day teachers conference. This was something new for the black Christian schools in South Africa. Many of these schools are isolated from other Christian schools. Most of them are less than 10 years old. Several of them started out as daycare facilities and evolved into elementary and high schools. Most of the teachers have little professional training, let alone Christian training. Add to that the fact that during the Apartheid years, blacks were not allowed to enter such professions as engineers, doctors, lawyers and accountants. The only profession deemed suitable for blacks was the teaching profession. Little wonder that today few black students aspire to be teachers, to enter a profession that was tainted with the demeaning stamp of approval from a racist



## Mission

government. So black schools in South Africa are severely handicapped both by lack of qualified teachers and by a serious lack of resources. For Christian schools, the need is even greater because of lack of funding or limited funding. The redeeming factor in Christian schools, however, is the dedication of teachers and parents to a faithful Christian life and the renewing spirit of hope that permeates those who live out of the resurrection of Christ. If that sounds a little theological and airy-fairy to you, let me illustrate that advantage by a concrete example.

An inspector came to Theocentric Christian College while we were there. It was the week following the two-week spring vacation. The inspector asked principal Wilson Mandende what the absentee rate was at his school following the spring break. Mr. Mandende said that two teachers were absent and half a dozen students. Nothing abnormal about that. The inspector was surprised. In the public schools the absentee rate among teachers after such a holiday is about 25 percent, he said, never mind the students. Even though public school teachers are better paid than private school teachers, their lack of dedication is noticeable. Student behaviour is also reported to be dismal at many public schools, as deteriorating family structure (single-parent families, AIDS ravaged families) and the availability of drugs have taken their toll on young people.

### Eager to receive

Nevertheless, we knew from Marc and Dora, from Samson Makhado and others that there was a real hunger among black Christian teachers in the Limpopo province to benefit from what their more privileged brothers and sisters in North America have to offer by means of a teachers conference. Not only that, these teachers were hungry for a "Reformed" perspective on education. If that sounds surprising to you after what "Apartheid" has done to the reputation of Calvinism, join the gang. We were amazed ourselves, once we were there, to be told by a black preacher that many Christians were turning to the more realistic expression of Reformed teachings after they discovered that the charismatic claims to healing (think of AIDS) did not materialize.

We also knew that these teachers and schools could not afford to attend such a conference unless we raised the money. Which is what we did. Through the helpful sponsorship of Worldwide Christian Schools, we could approach Canadian businesses owned by Reformed Christians and ask for financial support. We were able to raise \$18,000, which is the exact amount needed to pay for the cost of the four-day conference: the printing of programs and lectures, the purchase of registration material, and the provision of transportation, meals and housing for 94 teachers from 10 different schools. To be honest, we had hoped to raise more so that our own costs would at least

be partially covered by this fundraising drive, but the Lord decided otherwise. He measured out the cost of the conference a month beforehand (actually he knew it way before then), and provided just that amount – nothing more, nothing less.

### The conference

The conference started each day with devotion. The highlight for us was the singing. How these people can sing is beyond my ability to describe. They did not need instruments. Their voices came out clear and strong and in amazing harmony. And their bodies never remained frozen in self-conscious propriety. They shuffled and jiggled as they sang of the love of God through Jesus Christ. After devotions, one of us gave a worldview lecture for an hour. This was followed by subject-oriented workshops for various levels of schooling: foundation, intermediate and senior level. There was time for fellowship and for journaling. There was a wonderful spirit of camaraderie. And the food was good – except for the *miliepap*. Every conferee agreed that the consistency of this cornmeal porridge was of the cleaving-to-your-ribs kind. Later consumption of miliepap in Venda homes convinced even me that this staple of native cuisine (it's part of breakfast, lunch and supper) is quite enjoyable in a less watery and starchy condition, provided you add a tasty sauce.

To say that the conference was a success is not up to me to say. The testimonies of the teachers told us that they were extremely grateful. We were not the kind of people that would ask for adoration, but to have some conferees throw themselves prostrate before us during the closing ceremonies was a bit unnerving but also satisfying. In their culture that is not a sign of worship – just a sign of respect and gratitude. We were presented with native Venda costumes, in which we danced for the occasion. We were told that we must come back again for another conference (Venda Christians do not believe in "shoulds" and "coulds"). So far plans are to have another conference in 2009. Whether some of us will be part of that will depend on our physical and financial health. I plan to drive a harder bargain with the Lord next time. But we also want more participation from Reformed folks in South Africa. Not only do we not want to create a dependency on Canadian expertise and wealth, but it's not always the stewardly thing to do to ship eight people across an ocean for six to 12 weeks.



Dora Strooboscher instructs a group of library assistants (students) in the new library at Theocentric Christian College with head librarian Nancy Mamaasha looking on.

### The showpiece

Let me tell you about the library that we helped establish at Theocentric Christian College, especially through the hard work of Alice Witvoet and Jennie Witteveen. The Smithville schools had shipped 2,000 books ahead of our visit. Mr. Mandende decided to set aside a large classroom, at least twice the size of a normal classroom, for this project. The books are all in English, which is the required language used in schools, except when other languages are taught. Four large shelving units were brought into this room. And gradually these shelves began to be filled with books that had been organized and catalogued. It's a major task to catalogue 2,000 books in a few weeks. All of us helped, but Jennie and Alice did the bulk of the work, while we worked with teachers and even board members.

After half of the room was taken up by stacks, we filled the other half with custom-made furniture – six solid wooden tables and 36 solid wooden chairs. It's hard to describe the pride that Theocentric staff takes in this attractive and precious library, which can also be used for special meetings and classes. You must know that very few black schools in the Limpopo province have libraries. Not even public schools can afford libraries. The chief of the surrounding tribal village came to visit and to express his admiration. We met with him as a team, and he thanked us for this gift to the community. The principal had told him that he wanted to make the library and the *lappa* (once it is finished) accessible for others in the community.

### Positive reverberations

Besides having held a conference and having established a library, we can look back to other accomplishments, which were not always of our own doing. The best we can say is that God took our humble efforts and produced lasting results for the future. Because of the conference and

subsequent visits to some of the schools other than Theocentric, these isolated communities have come closer together. One conferee told us that before the conference the various schools were individualistic in their outlook and they competed with each other, sometimes stealing each other's students. "You taught us to work together. We felt the moving of the Holy Spirit." Many of the conferees did not want the conference to end.

Out of our visit has come the establishment of the Christian School Principals Association (Marc and Dora were still

there for the first meeting). This association intends to help organize the next 2009 conference and find a suitable venue. The schools will assume part of the cost of that conference.

We intend to contact other Reformed folk in South Africa to ask for their input and participation at that conference. I wrote and handed over a letter to the pastor of the Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerk in Louis Trichard in which I explained our mission and told him that shipping books from Canada is a costly affair, and could he not organize a book drive in his congregation? I asked an older couple in that congregation to monitor the outcome of this request. I have reason to believe that Theocentric has already received a shipment of books from that church.

We expect several teachers from these schools to attend the next Ontario Christian Teachers Convention in Ancaster, Ontario, provided they can pay the cost of travel and obtain a visitor's visa. Lodging for them will be provided free of charge.

We are looking for partner schools here in Canada for some of the schools who are part of this new association of principals. We know that Gondolikhethwa Christian School has an active partnership with Langley Christian School (K-12), and Fraser Valley Christian High School in Surrey has an active partnership with Tshikevha Christian School in Thohoyandou. I have already mentioned the lively connection between Smithville schools and Theocentric Christian College.

### The challenge

I must end with a brief report on a devotion given by principal Mandende to his teachers at 7 a.m. You must know that this man is a tireless warrior for the Lord. He walks 10 kilometers to school every day, and 10 kilometers back again. That in itself speaks of devotion and uncomplaining discipline. He read from Nehemiah 5. The

*Continued on page 16*

**Ecclesiastes**

# Life and death are opposites

*Light is sweet,  
and it pleases the eyes to see the sun.  
However many years a man may live,  
let him enjoy them all.  
But let him remember the days of darkness,  
for they will be many.  
Everything to come is meaningless.*

Ecclesiastes 11:7.8.

**A. A. van Ruler**

This is a remarkable statement in more than one sense. It is not that difficult to understand. Nevertheless, these words contain something of the unfathomable. What exactly is the Preacher saying? What is he emphasizing?

Should we interpret these words as an expression of bitterness? Is the Preacher pointing out that, though we may be enjoying life now, we'd be better off reflecting on death a bit more – and that the darkness and nihilation of death will deprive us of all our delight in life and our joy in existence?

This is how the Bible has often been interpreted through the ages. For many this was what faith and religion meant. The church sucks the very blood and joy out of human life. It stubbornly poses the reality of death over against life, and the darkness over against the light. Over time that way leads to the triumph of darkness over light, for it is all that remains. The light gradually fades and gives way to darkness. In the end, life becomes a kind of death.

But this is not the train of thought the Preacher has in mind. He does pay attention to death. He speaks of the days of darkness, and he even adds that they will be many. So it seems here as if he locates the source of the meaninglessness of life in the darkness of death. But over against death, he sets life. Over against the days of darkness, the years of light. These, too, can be many. Over against the meaninglessness to come he therefore sets the joy in what is.

Is this, then, the emphasis of the text? Is this one of the Preacher's closing thoughts that emerges from his series of reflections? There is indeed incredibly much meaninglessness, futility, failure, folly and violence in the world, but there is one fact that stands out as obviously as the nose on your face – that the light is sweet and that it pleases the eyes to see the sun. In spite of everything, we exist. We may exist in an abyss of loss and decay, but we do exist. And existence is better than non-existence; being better than non-being. This is the mystery that we cannot fathom or grasp: that there is something and not nothing.

The Preacher, however, does not put it in such philosophical terms. He is not first of all talking about being and about the reality of everything, although these do play a role. All those who believe in creation will have a deep awareness of reality and of the gift implicit in it. But the Preacher is first of all talking about life and its sweetness. We don't just exist; we also live. And life is sweet. There is light. The sun shines anew each day, and it makes everything brighter. The world seems filled with laughter. The warmth of the sun feels good on our skin. The light is life.

The Preacher expresses this positive love for life without any hesitation. He has no intention of contradicting it. His words about the darkness of death are not in any way meant to diminish the light of life. I'm tempted to draw the opposite conclusion. Does he perhaps mean to say that the darkness of impending death actually enhances the light of life? And that this darkness



*Allegory of the vanities of life by Harmen Steenwyck*

causes the light to stand out more? And that therefore we must also keep the darkness of death in mind so that we may rejoice the more in the light of life?

This isn't spelled out in the text in so many words. Nevertheless, the sweetness of the light is not threatened or overcome by the darkness. We are here for a time, sometimes for a long time. The sun shines, and there is light. Death can never completely undo that. The fact that we will die one day will not erase the fact that we are now alive, and the fact that we have been here will be true for all eternity. That is an incredibly great mystery. It is a gift for which we can never give adequate thanks. Is the meaning of life perhaps to be found in praise, that is, in the fact that we call life good, that we let the sun shine on our skin and simply delight in the touch of this light of life?

However, on the other hand, the Preacher reminds us, we must not seek escape into life and into light. That's not the nature of our creaturely situation. Then we are hiding from darkness and death – out of fear. We are then fleeing from meaninglessness, the abyss, the lostness of things. And in our panic we run as fast as we can through the light and through life. We are trying to sate ourselves with its sweetness. We want to drink in the light. We just can't get enough of it. However, beneath the radar death is hard on our heels. That's why we tear through life. A lot of so-called lust for life is at bottom fear of death.

But the creature does not live in light alone. The Creator is another matter entirely. He dwells only in the light – in fact, it is a light that is unapproachable for us. He even hides himself in the light. God is sweetness itself. And he dwells also only in life. He is life itself.

We, however, have been called into being and then laid in the dust of death. We may not forget this. We must integrate death into our lives. This is not a matter of bitter

cynicism but of creaturely realism.

However, we must also not dive so deeply into the darkness of death that we lose ourselves in it, and that the light of life is transmuted into darkness and loses all its sweetness. That would be ingratitude.

We have been assigned a handbreadth. We walk a small terrain, and we must live within those limits. But we must do so to the full. We must breathe in the air by huge lungfuls. But in the end we must blow out our last breath. And we must remind ourselves that our terrain is indeed small, for we must learn to see our creaturely situation clearly.

There is also something wonderful about this situation. We are able to enjoy the light of life, and we can reflect on the darkness of death. This is the awesome significance of human consciousness. With it we can also encompass death – or, at least, we can approach death. Whether we can fully realize what it is to be dead is another question. But we can have knowledge of death.

We know because God knows. In this knowledge we are able to oversee our entire place and situation as creatures of God. This is how we grasp our personhood and our life as a unity. It is, therefore, part of the humanity of life to remember our death. The saying "memento mori" is not a lugubrious idea. It can also be a matter of human dignity.

Is our consciousness of death so elevating that it constitutes a victory over death? Does our consciousness, our conscience, our knowing-with God, our integration of death constitute our immortality?

This is where the New Testament steps in. It tells us: not too fast, hold up, for to gain victory over death required an entirely new act of God – the resurrection of our Mediator Jesus Christ. And we can only begin to know this from the good news passed on by the apostles.

## Family

# Imagination separates mess from masterpiece

**Lisa M. Petsche**

It's rare that I can find scissors or tape at home when I need them. Or scrap paper or glue, for that matter.

Moreover, our kitchen desk is usually a disaster area these days, littered with bits of paper and sheets with corresponding cut-outs, among other remnants.

That's because Sean, our youngest, is always in the process of creating something. In fact, his sisters now refer to him as the inventor. (Not surprisingly, one of his favourite cartoon characters is Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius, who enjoys inventing gadgets and has a robotic pet dog that transforms into all sorts of nifty tools as the need arises.)

Sean started out arranging his toys and other objects in elaborate patterns, stacking and nesting them and lining them up. Then he hit upon the idea of tying or taping them together to make various types of creatures and machines.

Now there are often pieces of paper or cardboard tacked on as well, which could be horns, propellers, wheels or wings – or just about anything else. Increasingly, a drinking straw, Popsicle stick, rubber band, feather, wad of cotton, facial tissue or coffee filter gets added to the mix.

For his last birthday my parents gave Sean a large tool box to hold such items, and included an assortment of buttons, corks, fabric scraps, bits of string, stray hardware and the like – “beautiful junk,” as his kindergarten teacher referred to these odds and ends, col-

lecting them for classroom art projects.

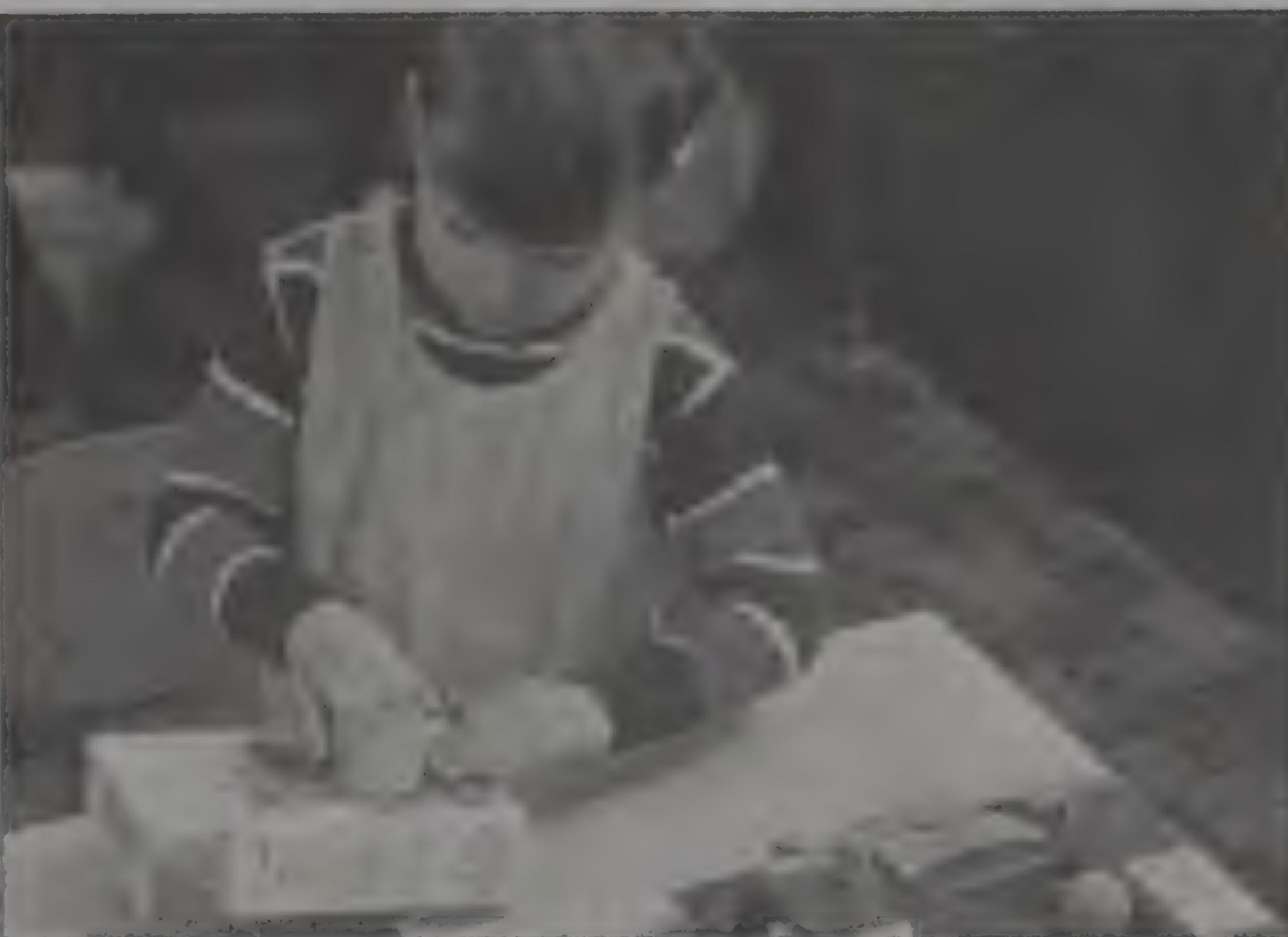
If anyone in the family is missing anything – an eraser or a spool of thread, for example – we now assume it's been seconded to one of Sean's inventions. (To our amusement, he initially called them “conventions” and wouldn't accept correction.)

Scotch tape is currently a part of every creation. It amazes me how Sean can sniff out a roll. The

other day I arrived home with some shopping bags in hand; the contents included a multi-pack of tape. As I removed it from the bag, Sean, who had been in his bedroom, suddenly appeared at my side, eager to claim one of the rolls.

Apart from tape, his creations involve materials such as tissue boxes and other cardboard packaging, soup cans, coffee tins and paper towel cores.

An eco-friendly inventor, Sean also employs plastic lids from a wide variety of containers, frayed shoelaces, empty candy containers, broken kitchen utensils, old cassette tapes and irreparable watches.



A child uses his imagination to make a car out of boxes.

Although he doesn't go rummaging, if he spots something interesting while passing by a waste container, he'll snatch it out. He'll also retrieve items from our blue boxes before they make it to the curb. Rarely is there a discarded item that doesn't appeal to him. (Whatever doesn't fit in the invention box ends up crammed under his bed.)

Sean has even used himself as raw material, making whiskers, claws and horns, which he tapes to his clothing or skin. (He learned the hard way that it's not a good idea to tape anything to your hair, including your eyebrows.)

On the days he doesn't have school, the first thing Sean usually does in the morning

when he comes into the kitchen is head for the desk, not the pantry or refrigerator.

When it comes to displaying his inventions, though, he favours high-traffic areas – especially doorways. The threshold of his bedroom often has the appearance of being booby-trapped, due to his generous use of string.

I have to exercise caution when walking through the house, so as not to trip and injure myself, but, more importantly, so I don't trample the fruits of Sean's painstaking labour.

One recent evening, just before the kids' bedtime, I was annoyed to discover a large assortment of Sean's toys and other items that appeared to be haphazardly strewn around one end of the living room. I sought out Sean and admonished him for neglecting to tidy up.

“That's not a mess, Mommy – it's my new invention,” he replied indignantly. It turns out it was “a twister thing,” simulating a tornado and its aftermath.

Apparently I still need some practice distinguishing between a mess and a masterpiece.

*Lisa M. Petsche is a mother of three and a freelance writer specializing in family life.*

## You're doing fine

**Lynn Marie-Ittner Klammer**

It was one of those mundane, yet monumen-tally chaotic “mommy mornings”.

All four kids had been uncharacteristically uncooperative in preparing for the day, and getting each ready and out to the van became an exercise in diligence and patience. Even my own responsibilities were heavy that day. A bake sale, three signed permission slips, a book order, bags of foul-weather gear, and four nutritionally-sound lunches became a mind-bending exercise in speed and accuracy as I simultaneously handed out each item as I shoved the kids out the door. Next came the timeless arguments over who was deserving of the coveted front seat of the van, a false start out the driveway as my son had forgotten his coat, and a speedy drive to the school amidst a strange mix of morning prayers and petty arguments.

When I finally managed to deliver each child to his/her respective classrooms, complete with a fragile art project and the various other paraphernalia, I was feeling quite harried. As I delivered the last child to her classroom, the school bell began insistently ringing so I quickly shoved my daughter through the door, throwing her backpack after her.



“I made it”, I sighed to myself as I slumped against the wall outside the classroom. It had been close. It had been crazy...but I had done it.

Just as I was about to drag myself back to my van for the blessedly quiet ride home, I felt a hand on my shoulder. Turning my head I saw the smiling, sympathetic face of my daughter's teacher and heard her say, “You're doing fine,” as she slipped back

around the corner and into her classroom.

It was a simple thing – those three words of encouragement from Mrs. O'Dell, and at the time I thought nothing of it beyond wondering if I really looked so frazzled that morning. In fact, it wasn't until months later that I realized how often those words had come back to me.

As a psychologist, I've taught many people stress management, and one of the phrases I often use in exercises to help people relax is “all is well”. I have even used it myself from time to time. However, I found that Mrs. O'Dell's words kept coming back to me over and over again, and soon replaced that commonly used phrase. After all, “all” is not always well. On the other hand, “You're doing fine” does not imply

perfection, but rather a more realistic level of achievement.

When I'm stressed, or feeling inadequate as a mom, my thoughts often turn to Mrs. O'Dell's casual comment. The events of that early morning were just part of a continuing lesson in humility for me. As a “mom” I'm always imperfect, often in error, but usually I get the job done with some level of acceptability.

My focus needs to be on that positive aspect of what I do rather than the way in which I fall short. It's a far healthier and more productive practice in managing my everyday stress and moving forward toward being a better mom. I think Mrs. O'Dell was trying to tell me that in her brief message. Her hand on my shoulder was like a pat on the back for doing well, and her words a small ray of light amidst the chaos.

If you ever doubt your ability, or feel down and depressed, I hope you'll remember Mrs. O'Dell's words. You don't have to get everything right or be a perfect model of motherhood. The multitude of things you do right, are more important than the few you do wrong. If you're doing your best, I'll bet “you're doing fine”.

## Environment

## Largest wind farm complex in Canada is in the Gaspe

Maynard van der Galien

The largest Wind Power Complex (wind farm) in Canada is located near the coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence in the beautiful rugged area of the Gaspe region of Quebec.

It's quite a picturesque sight as you travel through the Matane area and see 133 wind turbines spaced out on a mountain ridge. You see them for miles – many miles. We traveled through the area last fall by bus on a sightseeing vacation to Quebec's magnificent Gaspe region.

The first time I saw many such wind turbines was a few years ago when I traveled through northern Germany and Denmark. I was impressed then. Germany has 16,000 wind turbines, mostly in the northern part of the country.

Power from the 133 wind turbines at the Le Nordais wind farm in the Gaspe Region of Quebec is sold to Hydro-Quebec.

Onshore turbine installations in hilly or mountainous regions tend to be on ridgelines generally three kilometers or more inland from the nearest shoreline. This is done to exploit the so-called topographic acceleration. The hill or ridge causes the wind to accelerate as it is forced over it. The additional wind speeds gained in this way make large differences to the amount of energy that is produced. Great attention is paid to the exact positions of the turbines (a process known as micro-siting) because a difference of 30 metres can sometimes mean a doubling in output.

Canada has a potential of approximately 30,000 megawatts in developable wind resources, enough to supply 15 per cent of its electrical power.

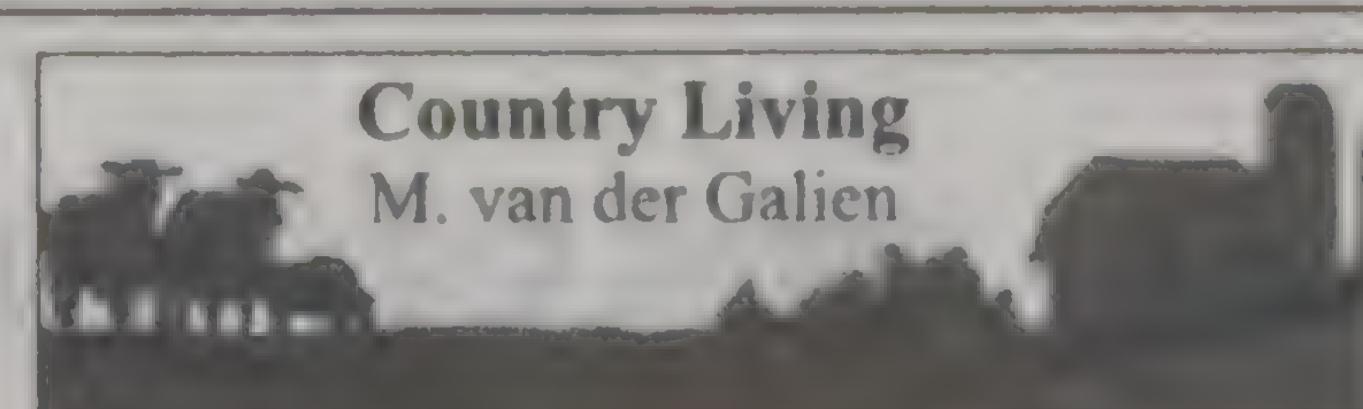
According to the Canadian Wind Energy Association, the world's wind energy potential is five times greater than current global electricity consumption.

Wind energy is renewable, non-polluting and sustainable. It requires no fuel to produce, generates no greenhouse gases, toxic waste or radioactive waste. Each megawatt-hour of electricity generated by wind energy represents a saving of almost one ton of carbon dioxide emissions released into the atmosphere each year over coal or diesel-fueled electricity.

The only problem – a big one – is that wind energy is very expensive. Extracting one kilowatt/hour of energy from the wind costs four times as much as using fossil fuels.

Some parts of the world have stronger winds than other parts. Normally, the higher the altitude, the stronger the wind.

A wind turbine can only generate limited electricity, so a number of wind turbines can be built in an area to form a



Eggbeater windmill in Gaspe

wind farm. The "modern" wind turbine or windmill looks much different from the traditional windmills in Holland – the ones you know from pictures. The new wind turbines have a wider span, with three blades. They can't be too close together otherwise the wind turbines will interfere with the airflow and reduce the electricity produced.

Wind turbines can be found both on land and out to sea. In Denmark, near the capital city of Copenhagen, I saw long rows of wind turbines offshore. I saw the turbines close up from the ship we were on as we entered the harbour. I was told that off-shore winds are 20 per cent stronger than on land.

Wind farms are quite popular in Scandinavian countries. Denmark generates over 20 per cent of its electricity with wind turbines, the highest percentage of any country. In the 1970's, Denmark made a commitment to eventually produce half of the country's power by wind.

Canada ranks after the Netherlands. Up to the end of 2006, Germany had the highest total installed wind power capacity (20,620) MW in the world, followed by Spain (11,615), USA. (11,603), India (6,270) Denmark (3,140) China (2,604) Italy (2,123) UK (1,963) Portugal (1,716) France (1,567) the Netherlands (1,560) and Canada (1,459) (Source: European Wind Energy Association)

Now the bird question. On shore and near-shore studies show that the number of birds killed by wind turbines is negligible compared to the number that die as a result of other human activities such as traffic and power lines and high-rise apartments. One study showed one bird per turbine blade per year.

Bats, however, are not so lucky.

*Maynard van der Galien writes weekly and monthly agricultural columns. He's done that every week and is starting his 19th year this month.*



## Out of reverence...continued from p. 13

nobles and officials were oppressing their fellow Israelites, who had returned from captivity, burdening them with taxes and enslaving their sons and daughters. He told the nobles and officials to stop exacting usury, to return the fields and houses, and to give wine and bread to their subjects. And then Nehemiah said that he himself had not oppressed anyone, even though he could have done so, being a governor. Mr. Mandende focused on verse 9b: "But out of reverence for God, I did not act like [the nobles did]."

It was the first morning after the Easter break, and the teachers had just sung "What a mighty God we serve." He addressed the teachers: "Out of reverence for God, give your learners bread and wine. Don't do what you do for any other reason." Then he addressed us, the visitors from Canada. "We South Africans have been exploited and we have suffered," he said, making a not so subtle reference to the years of Apartheid and its aftermath. "Help us third-world people out of reverence for the Lord. Don't do it for any other reason." All of us visitors felt appropriately admonished. Just in case we had come with romantic notions of how nice it must be to help these people and how wonderful they must consider us, this man placed us under the power of the voice of God addressed to first-world citizens.



Principal Mavis Musandiwa (left) discusses the constitution for the newly formed Christian School Principals Association with Wilson Mandende, principal of Theocentric Christian College

## Just in passing

I could tell you about Ike Witteveen keeping 200 students spellbound with his experiments learned from Redeemer Professor Henry Brouwer's DVD on science experiments, about Dora Strooboscher leading the singing of teachers in the style of a Venda woman, about Peter Van Huizen and Peter Roukema dancing a polka instead of the African way of swaying to hymns, about Marc Strooboscher being asked by a black preacher to read Scripture and being called "the old man" because of his white hair (being called an old man in the Venda culture is a compliment). I could also tell you that Jennie told the Easter story to kids in a black church, and that Alice heard a sad tale of mother-in-law oppression from a teacher who had to fall on her knees to beg her mother-in-law if she could buy something with money she herself had earned. And I could entertain you with an account of how a gaggle of grade-ten girls ran their fingers through my hair because "it is so soft." But I won't, apart from mentioning these things. They are the memories that give a particular shine to the service we, I pray and hope, rendered to the Lord out of reverence for him. The main story must be the rebuilding of the spiritual and educational walls of God's chosen ones in the Limpopo Province in South Africa.

## Church

# Little church on the prairie



built by mostly volunteer labor, totally burned down in the early morning hours of March 9, 1958. This church is the Christian Reformed Church of Iron Springs, Alberta. Though small in size, this church has had a strong influence on many people. Because southern Alberta had a major sugar beet industry; many immigrants from the post-war years to the early 1960's found their way to this area to work in the beet fields. If they were of reformed background they would come to the Iron Springs CRC for their Sunday worship. Some came and stayed for a short time, others for a number of years, and some who are still here today living in what has become a thriving agricultural community.

This year the CRC denomination is celebrating its sesquicentennial. Two years ago Nobleford CRC, our mother church celebrated its centennial, and eight years ago we, the Iron Springs CRC, celebrated our fiftieth anniversary. Throughout the past 150 years many blessings have filtered down from the grandmother (CRC denomination) to the mother (Nobleford CRC) and to the daughter (Iron Springs CRC). One might say that the daughter, the mother, and the grandmother truly exemplify "grace through every generation".

In sharing some of the anecdotes of our 58-year history, we hope that any readers of this article who have passed through Iron Springs will have their memories twiggled and that they will share with us their perspectives and stories about their stay in Iron Springs. That can be done in a few sentences or in longer form and mailed to:

Albert Kolk, Box 329, Picture Butte Alberta TOK 1VO  
or emailed to: [gheinen@telus.net](mailto:gheinen@telus.net)

## Who remembers:

when a fist fight broke out beside the church between two young men arguing about the merits of a new Chevy car and of an old Model T? the time a member of the congregation suddenly passed away just before harvest and the entire church community pitched in to get the family's crops in on time? the time the janitor left some live plants that were beside to pulpit to dry out and die because he felt they did not belong in a church sanctuary? the ceiling of the sanctuary being so covered with flies in the summertime that every so often some would drop on the worshipers during the service? when in the early 1950's two men got into such a heated argument in front of the church that others had to pull them apart? the many discussions about starting a Christian school in the church basement? the time of the transition from Dutch services to English ones with initially the afternoon services remaining in Dutch and that later changing to Dutch every other Sunday afternoon? And who remembers the older gentleman who sat down one Sunday afternoon and upon realizing the service would be in English, he got his wife up and he stormed out of church? how some people would get upset if the janitor changed the brand of the coffee that would be served after the service? when the ceiling fans were installed and some people said they blew too much air into their necks and others complained that the fans weren't blowing enough air? the Polish neighbor living next door to the church who in 1958 exclaimed, "That Dutch church burned like 'hell'." the gifts and donations received from other CRC congregations in both Canada and the U.S. to help rebuild the church in 1958?

Our church sanctuary is undergoing some renovations at the present time once they are complete, we would like to share your responses/memories in our congregation at a program to be held to celebrate the sanctuary's new look. So all of you former Iron Springers, "please let us hear from you!"

## On Shalom

*Shalom is the human being dwelling at peace in all her or his relationships: with God, with self, with others (fellows), with nature."*

Nicholas Wolterstorff

As Synod 2007 of the Christian Reformed Church draws near I have mixed emotions. On the one hand I hope that the discussion on the ordination of women will lead to full inclusion. On the other hand I worry it will lead to more exclusion. However, my upbringing taught me to look for God's grace in my life and count my blessings, so I will let hope override doubt during the next weeks.

A number of thoughts are crossing my mind on the upcoming discussion on women. I'll mull them over in this column; let them float down the river so to speak, and out to sea.

Over the years we have talked a lot about gender equality, freedom and justice. Women and men are created in God's image and ought to have equal opportunities to serve God in all areas of church life. One gender should not have the power to make decisions over the other gender. Yet this is what has been happening.

Power is a complex concept. I want to quote from the book *After Eden* compiled and edited by Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen. The book contains essays on gender brokenness and offers ideas on gender reconciliation. In one of the chapters, theologian James Poling defines power as "the ability to act in effective ways with people. To the extent that people or institutions deprive a person of power, that person is rendered powerless and her life is limited. We are mistaken to think of power as simply a one-way effect that individuals have on others."

Poling continues to state that power means "the energy of the relational web. It means the ability to sustain internal relationships which increases the power of the web as a whole." Conversely, according to theologian Bernard Looming also in *After Eden*, "abuse of power is based on the presumption that one can affect others, without affecting oneself. The consequence of abuse of power is estrangement. As long as the ability to aggressively influence another person is deemed to be a strength, the corresponding powerlessness of the other person is considered a weakness. In this model, the gulf between the powerful and powerless, inevitably grows wider." The solutions to unequal relationships that distance us from each other are relationships based on mutual freedom and respect."

Nicholas Wolterstorff explores these thoughts a step further in the same book. He believes that we must move beyond mutual service to each other and form relationships built on *shalom*. *Shalom* is a Hebrew word meaning peace. Relationships in the spirit of *shalom*, are relationships that offer mutual love and peace, and bring out on-going mutual growth, creativity and transformation. Such relationships enable us to be at peace with one another. They offer us a deep sense of wholeness, tranquility, prosperity and

## Building Trust

Vicky Van Andel Ed.



harmony. He states elsewhere that even a better translation of the word *shalom* is *flourish*.

Wolterstorff offers advice on how to do that: "If we are to overcome beliefs and practices that are at odds with the biblical vision of *shalom* for gender relations we need to *listen* as un-defensively as possible to the people who are hurting. We must listen to those who, because of their social background, see the situation differently from ourselves. It is especially important that we, who see history from the topside, listen to those who see it from the underside: Gentiles listening to Jews, Jews to Palestinians, men to women, rich to poor."

I recently received a letter from Aria Sawyer who lives in Sarospatak, Hungary. She writes that this past year the Synod of the Reformed Church in the Ukraine has reversed a decision that was made in 1990 to ordain women. As a result, women who were ordained since that time have been defrocked and excluded from preaching and serving the sacraments. The decision caused much upheaval. She further mentions that women in the Ukraine face a difficult process when they choose to go into ministry. So some women come to study in Sarospatak. Who is listening to these women?

On the other hand, Aria writes, the Reformed Churches in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, have been including women in ordained offices, without restrictions, for up to thirty years already, and the communities have been richly blessed by them.

In his book *Exclusion and Embrace*, Miroslav Volf quotes the words of Jesus: "The truth will make you free." Volf adds, "...free to make journeys from the self to the other and back and see our common history from their perspective as well as ours, rather than insisting on the absolute truth from our own perspective; free to live a truthful life and be a self-effacing witness to truth rather than fabricating our own truths and imposing them on others; free to embrace others in truth." He states that Jesus, who claimed to be the Truth, refused to use violence (power) to persuade those who did not recognize his truth.

I frequently participate in Rotary Club meetings. Rotarians dedicate themselves to the service of others. Each meeting, in boy-scout manner, they place their hand on their chest and recite their slogan consisting of four questions relating to responsibilities towards other people: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned? They call it the four-way test. Any activity which does not pass the four-way test is scrapped. Rotarians practice *shalom*.

On behalf of many women and men, I encourage the delegates to Synod 2007 to make decisions that honour God and all people. I ask them to listen. May God bless them. Let's pray for *shalom* so all can flourish!

Vicky Van Andel is the editor of this column. Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact her via e-mail at: [vickyv@telus.net](mailto:vickyv@telus.net)



## Classifieds

Obituaries		Personal
<p><i>In Loving Memory - At the Osgoode Care Centre on Saturday, May 5, 2007</i></p> <p><b>CHRISTINE MUDE (nee VanderWoerdt)</b> of Brinston, age 92 Beloved wife of the late Teunis Mude. Loving mother of Cose Brinsting of Brockville Bram (Gerda) Mude of Iroquois Martin (Wilma) Mude of Ottawa Joe (Jacquie) Mude of Constance Bay Bert Mude of Brinston Jack (Anne) Mude of Stittsville Audrey (Weipo) Bruining of Mombsburg Christine (Neil) Vandermeer of Iroquois and Ron (Denise) Duprey of Ottawa Chenshied Oma of 24 grandchildren and 38 great-grandchildren. Dear sister of Adri VanderWoerdt of Holland. Also survived by nieces &amp; nephews. Predeceased by a brother Gijs and sisters Ploon deHaan and Cornelius DeVnes.</p> <p>A Service of Thanksgiving for Christine's life was held at the Community Christian Reformed Church, Dixons Corners, on May 8. Interment was at the New Union Cemetery in Williamsburg.</p> <p>Donations to Timothy Christian School or Winchester Hospital would be gratefully acknowledged by the family.</p> <p>Correspondence: Bram &amp; Gerda Mude, 2 Grove St Unit 1 Box 1, Iroquois ON K0E 1K0</p> 	<p><b>Workum, Fr.</b> Sept 13, 1938 Promoted to glory from his home</p> <p><b>JOHN (Jan) JOHANNES BOKMA</b> John's faith became sight when his Lord took him home after a courageous 7 month battle with pancreatic cancer. He is survived by loving wife Alice nee Assies His three daughters and their families Shan &amp; John VanGroningen, Calgary, Alta Britt, Justin, Tiana and Tyler Sylvia &amp; Andrew Paulin, Brantford, Ont Megan Sonya &amp; Phil Demik, Hamilton, Ont Philip, Ryan and Ally His sisters and brothers-in-law Joke &amp; Sipke DeSchiffert Claire &amp; Bill Beldman Pat &amp; the late Bill Kinkel Harmene &amp; Garry Sytsma</p> <p>John retired in 1999 from Union Gas after 42 years of faithful service. All through his life John loved to travel, volunteer and spend hours in his workshop making special gifts for family and friends. He truly enjoyed the little things in life and showed us how to be content in all circumstances. Even while facing cancer dad showed remarkable strength and dignity that came from his faith in God and never-ending love for his family. Although we will sorely miss our husband, dad and pake in every imaginable way, we rejoice in the knowledge that he is with his Lord and Savior. Psalm 23 was his favorite: "The Lord is my Shepherd" Address: 605 Lynn Valley Rd RR2 Port Dover ON N0A 1N2</p>	<p>It is with great sadness our family announces the passing of our beloved husband and father</p> <p><b>HENK HONIG</b> who went home to be with our Lord and Savior at God's appointed time on May 14th, 2007, at the Grey-Bruce Health Services in Owen Sound. Henk will be very much missed by his wife Emma Honig of 50 years and children Fred Honig, Pamela Bartlett and Alexandra Salisbury and their families.</p> <p>Funeral service was held at Willowdale Christian Reformed Church, on May 19th, 2007. Interment was at York Cemetery.</p> <p>In memory of Henk, donations may be made to: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee 3475 Mainway, PO Box 5070 Stn LCD 1 Burlington ON L7R 3Y8</p> <p>Condolences: <a href="http://www.hank.honig@sympatico.ca">www.hank.honig@sympatico.ca</a></p>

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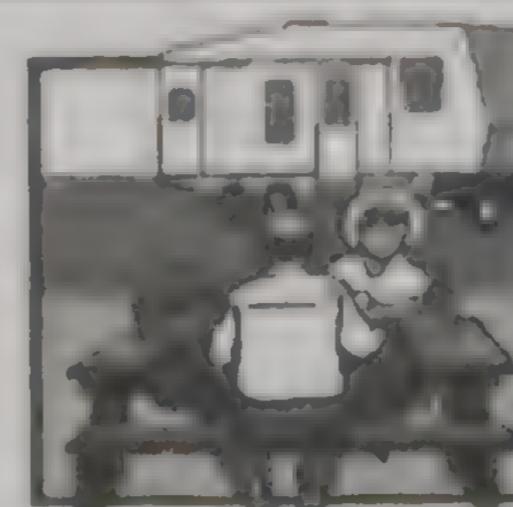
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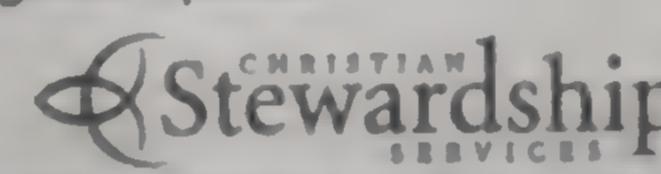


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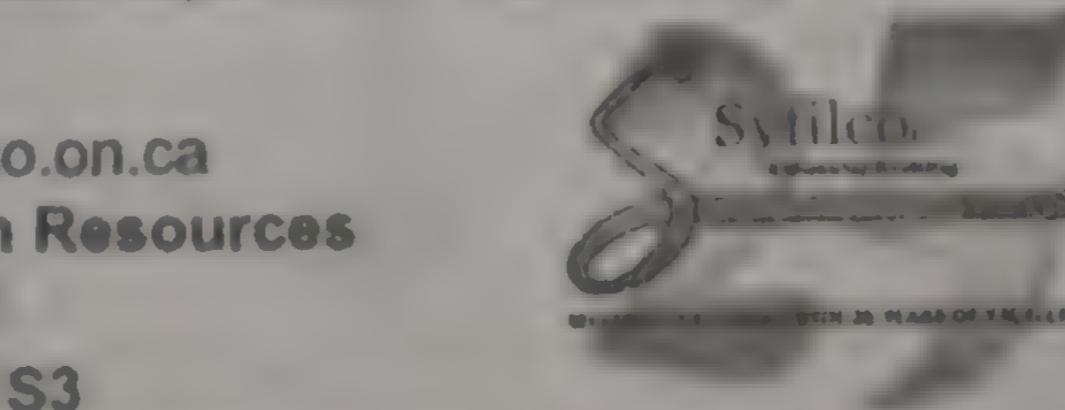
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In partnership with the Edmonton Public School Board, the Edmonton Society for Christian Education (ESCE) offers a unique P-12 Christian Education Program to over 1200 students at three distinct campuses. The board of ESCE is seeking an Executive Director to drive strategic planning, ensure the integrity of our vision and mission, and manage the daily operations of the Society.

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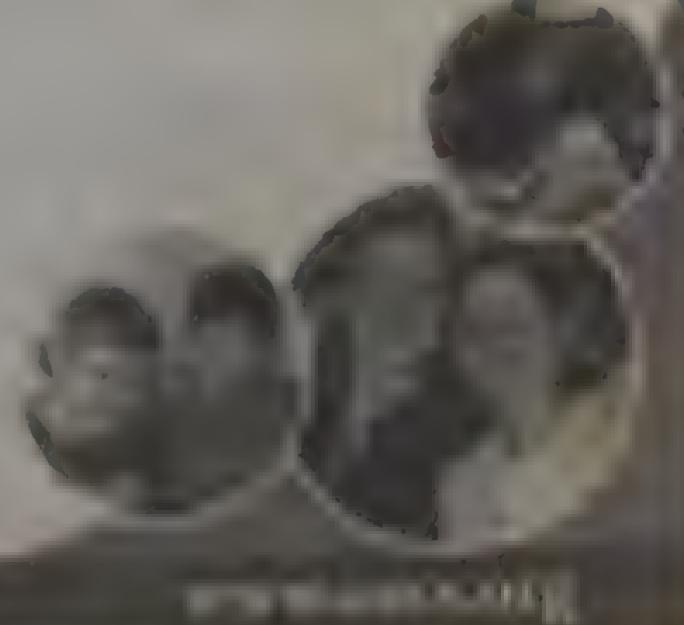
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Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools  
617 Garner Road, E.,  
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Informal inquiries can be made to the Executive Director at [adnang@oacs.org](mailto:adnang@oacs.org).



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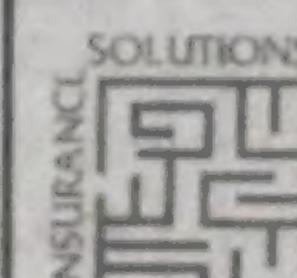
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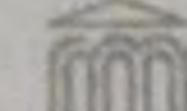
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See May 14 issue for more details

**Events/Advertising****CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**May 26** Laurentian Hills Christian School 40th anniversary, 11 Laurentian Dr, Kitchener, ON Dinner, program, \$15/person. To reserve by May 1st., call Mrs Grift 519-576-6700 or Mrs. Olthoff 519-742-5152. Check the web site for more details at [www.lhcs.ws](http://www.lhcs.ws)

**May 28-June 1 "A Vacation with a Christian Perspective"** ~ The annual Milk & Honey Summer Festival at Redeemer University College. This unique vacation offers a week of relaxation as well as cultural and spiritual stimulation. Guided tours, banquets, informative lectures, fellowship and entertainment. Join Dr Bert Polman and Professor Ray Louter as they explore the theme "Psalms of Lament and Psalms of Rejoicing." For more information or to register, call 905-648-2139 ext. 4521.

**June 2** Retirement celebration for Arie Vanderstoel, principal, Dunnville Christian School. See ad.

**June 9** Brighton Fellowship CRC celebrating re-opening from 2 - 4 pm. See ad this page.

**June 9** Liberation Choir in Concert, 8:00 pm Compass Point Bible Church-Kerns Rd. Burlington. A Fundraiser for Drummond House. 200 Voices conducted by Willem Van Suidamian Sadler – organist Jennifer McMahon – Soprano Soloist To order tickets call: Edith Dokter, 905 689 4357 Janetta Howson, 905 319 2662 Henk Guther, 905 319 8336.

**June 9, 10** The First Christian Reformed Church of Kemptville 50 year celebration. Banquet on June 9 and worship service on June 10. Contact Harmen Boersma (613-258-5565).

**June 10** Dutch Service will be held in the Ancaster Christian Reformed Church at 3:00 p.m. Rev. Jacob Kuntz will be preaching.

**June 10 Contemporary Christian Music Concert**, 7:00 pm, Grace Christian Reformed Church, 25 Channel Nine Court, Scarborough (just off McCowan Rd, a half block north of the 401, beside the CTV building), featuring the Stonesthrow Band with opening band Channel 121. Suggested donation of \$5 and/or a food donation for a local food bank.

**June 13** Hollandse Dag 10 a.m. at the Moorefield Community Centre. Details in May 14th issue or phone Hilbert Rumph at 1-519-638-2053.

**June 15, 16. GATEWAY VIETNAM MISSION CONFERENCE** at the ALL NATIONS MISSION CENTRE in Fort Erie, Ontario. For more info contact: Christian Aid - 800-871-0882 or visit [www.christianaid.ca/events.php](http://www.christianaid.ca/events.php)

**Sep 29** Netherlands Bazaar, Thornhill Community Centre. Details in following issues.

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**BRIGHTON FELLOWSHIP CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**  
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You're Invited to a Retirement Celebration for  
**Mr. Arie J. Vanderstoel**

Current principal of Dunnville Christian School.

Arie is retiring from his career in education at the end of the 2006/2007 school year.

Join us in celebrating on Saturday, June 2, 2007

Open House from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Dinner Celebration begins at 6:00 p.m.

(cost for the dinner is \$12.50/person)

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RSVP by May 16, 2007

for the dinner celebration and/or to participate in the tribute by calling Julie Schilstra at 905-774-6171

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## News

# Toronto's Lighthouse ministry receives new director

**Bob VanderVennen**

Approaching its 40th year of inner-city Christian ministry, the Lighthouse in Toronto has received Rob Datema as its new Executive Director to give leadership to diaconal services for low-income people and support needed by refugees and immigrants who continue to move to the heart of the city.

Located accessibly in mid-city Toronto, the Lighthouse Community Centre "demonstrates God's love by offering unconditional hospitality, by sharing our resources, and by helping people in need. We offer an atmosphere of respect, dignity and security in order to address spiritual, emotional and physical needs in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Datema grew up on a dairy farm in Blyth, Ontario. He studied forestry after high school, but when he served on a Summer Workshop in Ministry team he was led by God to a career in church and kingdom service. He attended Ontario Bible College and then Calvin Seminary. He did internships at Roseland Christian Ministry Centre in Chicago which, he says, "stretched me beyond my comfort zone." He also interned at Roselawn Community Church in Indiana and then served in youth ministry in Ottawa and Woodstock. From there he moved to Toronto where he has seen in fresh ways the effectiveness of integrated, holistic ministry to needy people in a big city. He is excited about the ministry at the Lighthouse.

Datema follows the leadership ministry of Ben Vanderlugt, who was Executive

Director for the past eight years. The Light-house has a complex history, as Christian Reformed people have worked to understand how best to show the love of Christ to impoverished and dislocated people located in a city whose language and customs they do not understand.

The Light-house started in 1968 as a church planting activity

*Rob Datema*

that at the same time would minister to the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of the inner-city poor. Toronto I CRC and Classis Toronto were partners. A Bible School was set up for the summer of 1968 in the Palmerston area of Toronto with a SWIM team and the services of Long-Term Volunteer Cindy Vander Vinne Dickson, all under the direction of Toronto I pastor Dr. R. Kooistra. The second summer another Daily Vacation Bible School was offered, and a house on Vermont Street was rented to house a year-around Bible study for children, and for other ministries.

The ministry was developing well and in 1971 Rev. Ken Verhulst began full-time leadership, developing children's clubs,

youth evangelism, Bible Study and Sunday afternoon worship services. The ministry flourished, though children's programs did not draw many families into the ministry. In 1973 the Lighthouse moved to its present location, a three-storey building at 1008 Bathurst Street, not far from Bloor Street. In 1974 the Sunflower Club had 35-40 girls attending. In the summer of 1975 the VBS was attended by 100 children. A series of Long Term Volunteers through the Board of Home Missions built various weekly programs. But then the neighborhood near the Lighthouse changed. Poorer families moved out and young professionals with few children moved in. Worship services were not growing and services for youth were not so well attended. In 1978 Pastor Verhulst accepted a call to a church in Calgary. The Lighthouse board and CRC Home Missions decided to end the ministry in April, 1980.

## Dirk Jongkind keeps the light burning

But Dirk Jongkind dreamed that the Lighthouse ministry could somehow be made to work. A new board for the ministry was formed, and having recently retired from his auto body repair business, Dirk persuaded the board to let him occupy an office in the building to see what might happen. The volunteers kept programs alive, and a Spanish group asked if it could use space for Bible study. A Korean church started using the building on Sundays for prayer and Bible study. A church in Brampton asked for help to find housing for a Vietnamese refugee family. This was the time when the boat people started pouring into Canada. In 1981 Rita Wong, a social worker, was hired with the help of CRWRC to work with the new immigrants.

Growth of old and new programs brought fresh vision. Refugee sponsorship became a new and major program, as did resettlement of refugees sponsored by outlying churches, refugees who wanted to resettle in Toronto where others from their culture were living. By 1988 a total of 660 refugees had been

sponsored. Worship services were started under the name of All Nations Christian Fellowship. Timothy Chan started Sunday Chinese worship services, which continued for many years. Cindy Dickson returned as Coordinator of the programs. The Lighthouse was brought back to life.

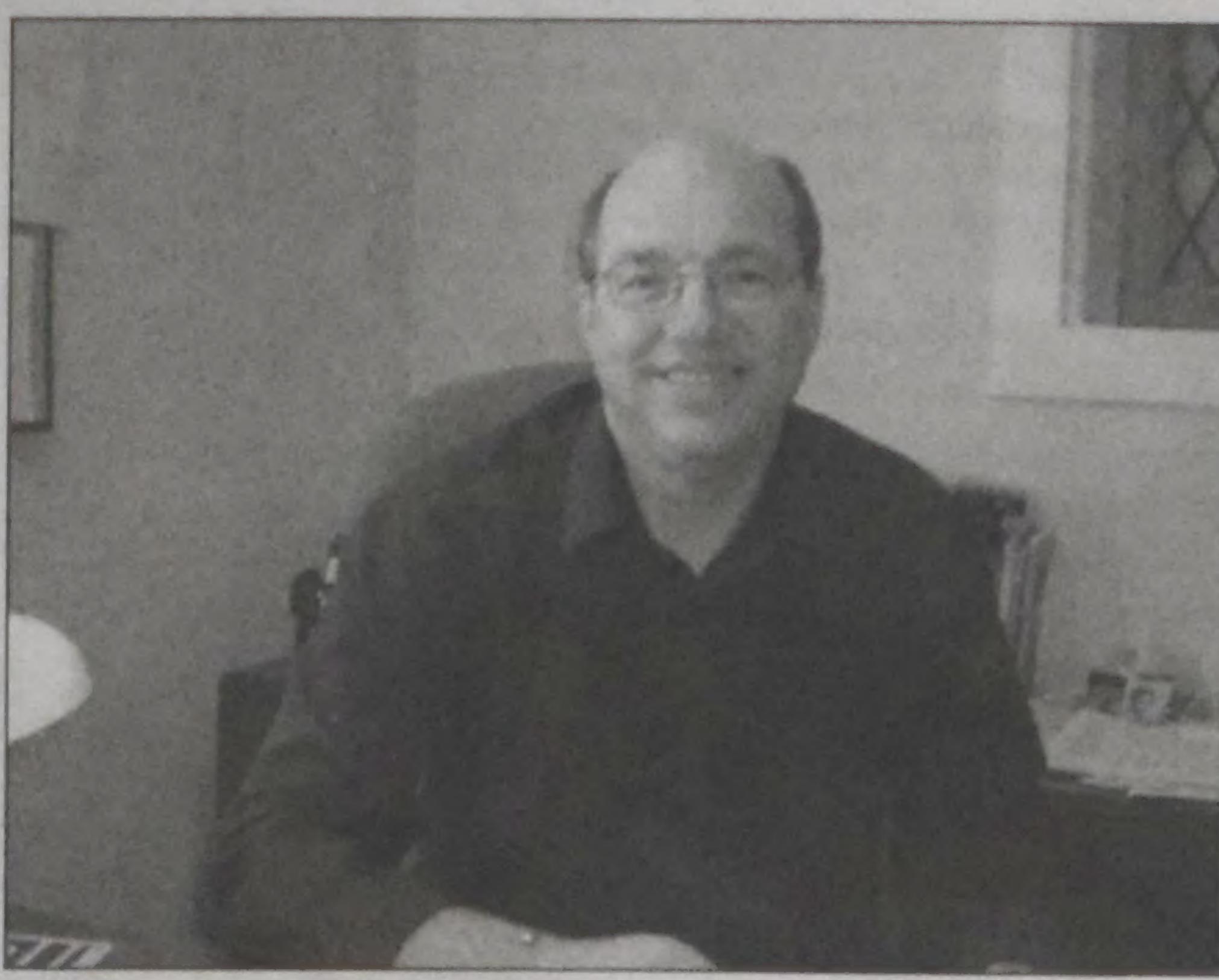
The Lighthouse would have died in 1980 without the vision and self-giving service of Dirk Jongkind. The Lighthouse remembers Dirk's birthday each year, and this year on March 24 its birthday party for him celebrated his 93rd birthday.

## Development and service today

A major need arose for southeast Asian ministries, and Timothy Chan ministered to Chinese people in many ways. In 1984 Cindy Dickson was appointed General Coordinator. In 1990 Adrian (Ed) Vandenberg became Executive Director, and in 1998 he was followed by Ben Vanderlugt.

Today the Lighthouse staff includes Datema, Chinese Coordinator Rita Wong, Hispanic Coordinator Samia Saad, Vietnamese Coordinator Thuy Tran and Administrator Janet Elliott, along with Custodian Miguel Avila. The people who are served come not only from the neighborhood near 1008 Bathurst Street, but from all over Toronto. Churches throughout the Toronto area recommend the Lighthouse to needy persons. There seems to be no end to the services that poor and displaced persons need as they struggle for a reasonable life, often without language skills and suitable work experience. Some of the Lighthouse services include Christian worship, food bank (a total of 2,743 food hampers were distributed in 2006), ESL classes, supportive and holistic counseling, employment workshops, housing assistance, children's programs, Bible studies, craft classes, seniors programs, connections with professional services, life skills workshops, friendship groups, family programs, and a seemingly endless list of other services as needed. Funding for the Lighthouse comes from church offerings from churches in Classis Toronto, from other churches, and from individual donations.

An important goal for the Lighthouse when it was started was church planting. All Nations church and a Chinese church have indeed arisen from this ministry. But the greater ministry is a vast diaconal service, and in addition to the paid staff there has always been the extraordinary ministry of unpaid volunteers. Thanks is due to the Toronto I CRC, which has always been the base of the ministry, with strong support from Classis Toronto. Today the Lighthouse is a multi-cultural Christian outreach and community centre demonstrating God's love in an atmosphere of respect, dignity and security. Services are provided in Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese and English languages.



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